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Thomas Owens.

ATHENIAN LETTERS.



ATHENIAN LETTERS:

OR, THE

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE

OF

AN AGENT OF THE KING OF PERSIA,

Residing at ATHENS during the PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

CONTAINING

THE HISTORY OF THE TIMES,

IN

DISPATCHES to the MINISTERS of STATE at the PERSIAN COURT,

BESIDES

LETTERS on various Subjects between HIM and his FRIENDS.

VOL. II.

DUBLIN:

JOHN ARCHER, No. 80, DAME-STREET.

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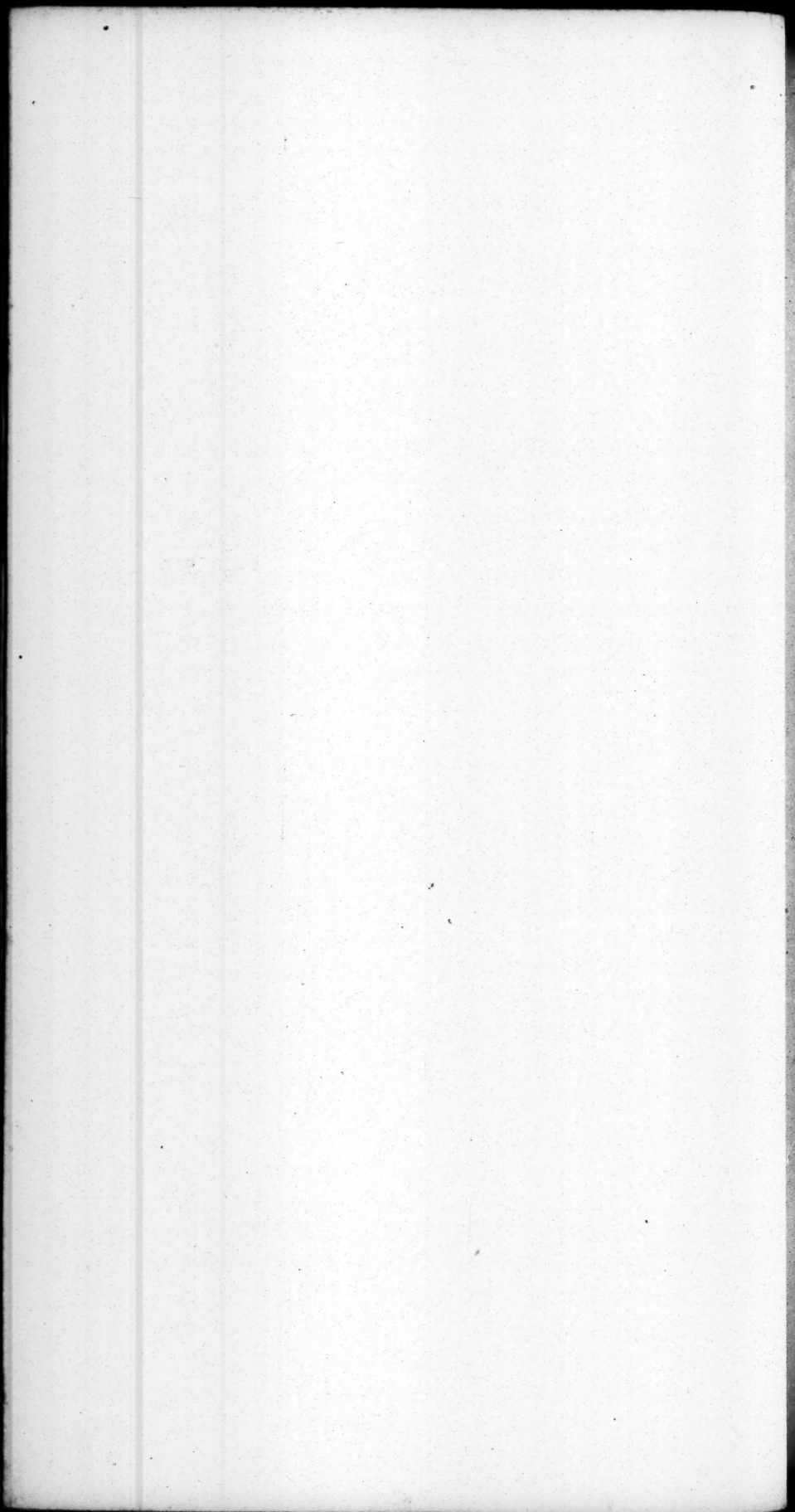
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ATHENIAN LETTERS:

OR, THE

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE

O F

AN AGENT OF THE KING OF PERSIA.

RESIDING AT ATHENS DURING THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

L E T T E R XCI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THERE have been several reports current in the city concerning the fleet, which, as I mentioned in former letters, was sent by the Peloponnesian allies to the relief of Mitylene. It is now certain, that after having been dispersed by a storm near Crete, they regained the coast of Peloponnesus, and were joined near Cyllene by

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sixteen gallies under the command of BRASIDAS the Spartan, an officer of rising reputation. When they had received this reinforcement, they pursued their course, as it is supposed, for Corcyra, to take advantage of the disorders which have lately arisen there. The Athenians have lately received dispatches from their ambassadors in that island, wrote during the height of the sedition, which gave some account of the rise and motives of it. Thou mayst remember, noble scribe, that several naval battles were fought between that state and Corinth, whilst the quarrel lasted, which preceded this war. The Corinthians sent home their prisoners without ransom; and they, as a return of gratitude, used their utmost endeavours to prevail with their fellow citizens to break the alliance with Athens, and join the Peloponnesian army. Being strongly opposed in this unjust attempt by PYTHIAS, president of the senate, they accused him of conspiring to deliver up the town to the Athenians; but when the cause came to a trial, they were unable to prove their charge, and condemned to pay a large fine. This ill success so exasperated the accusers, that they raised a tumult, and at the head of a faction, which opposed the Athenian interest, entered the senate by violence, and massacred above sixty senators of that party, and PYTHIAS amongst them. The seditious afterwards assembled the people, and maintained, that what they had done was necessary to preserve the independence and liberty of the island. The Athenians, upon the receipt of these dispatches, sent orders to NICOSTRATUS, admiral of their squadron at Naupactus, to sail directly to Corcyra, and support the democracy. They are likewise preparing to equip a larger squadron for the same service, if the increase of the tumult should make it necessary. They are the more concerned at this sedition, because the naval force of Corcyra renders that island a very useful ally: its

fleet at the beginning of the war was reckoned equal to that of any of the Grecian states, except Athens.

I doubt not, that CRATIPPUS has informed thee of the proceedings against the unfortunate Plataeans, since that affair falls more naturally within his province than mine. I shall, however, lay a brief narrative of it before thee. The commander of the siege observing, that the inhabitants of Plataea were reduced to great extremities, summoned them to surrender on condition, that no punishment should be inflicted upon them, till their cause had been tried and determined according to the rules of justice. In pursuance of the capitulation, twenty-five commissioners were sent from Lacedemon, who, without laying any crime to the charge of the Plataeans, put this single question to every one of them, "Have you done any service to our state during the war?" The Plataeans, sensible of the tendency of this strange examination, represented in the most pathetic terms, the services which their city had done to Greece in the Persian invasion, and the honours which had been decreed them for their public spirit; to which they added, that they had not embraced the Athenian alliance, till the Lacedemonians had deserted them. They accused the Thebans of being the source of their misfortunes, by attempting to surprize their city in the midst of peace. The Theban ambassadors in an inflammatory harangue reproached the Plataeans with having forsaken Thebes, their mother city, to fight under the banners of the Athenians, whom they called the tyrants of Greece. They said, the merits of their ancestors, instead of being a plea in their favour, were an addition to their crimes, since they had degenerated from their virtues. That the Thebans, far from attempting to take Plataea in an hostile manner (as had been represented)

were introduced by some of its wealthiest and worthiest citizens, with no other views than to assist their countrymen in shaking off an unnatural alliance.

The Lacedemonian commissioners, who had private orders to sacrifice Plataea to the resentment of the Thebans, persisted in demanding a reply to the question proposed and as it was answered in the negative by every one of the captive Plataeans, they were all put to death without mercy, to the number of two hundred. When the news of this illegal and barbarous act arrived here, the Athenians, to express their just sense of the fidelity and resolution of the Plataeans, gave the freedom of the city, and a privilege of being elected into offices, to the survivors and their children. The names of these new citizens were engraved on a column, and set up in the citadel near the temple of MINERVA.

An accident lately happened to me, which had almost discovered my real business at Athens, and laid me at the mercy of the resentful multitude. One CHREMES, a merchant of Chios, who deals in wines, was taken up by order of the Prytanes, on suspicion of managing a correspondence with Thebes and Sparta. Several papers relating chiefly to the condition of the Athenian docks, arsenals, and navy, were found in the wine vessels and other places of concealment in his house, which were examined in the senate, and a report afterwards made to the people of the discovery. Among these papers was a letter from CRATIPPUS, which CHREMES had not an opportunity of putting into my hands before he was seized. A great clamour was raised immediately over the city against me. The merchant was examined, but declared he had very little acquaintance with me, and not much more with CRATIPPUS, whom he had

seen at Rhodes, and knew nothing of the contents of the letter. I was summoned however to attend the tribunal of the Archon Polemarch (who has a jurisdiction over strangers) and found one of the ten orators appointed by the state to plead public causes, prepared with an indictment against me, importing, that I had violated the laws of hospitality, and wickedly made use of my abode at Athens to keep up a correspondence prejudicial to the republic. When I came to make my defence, I alledged, that there was nothing appeared from the letter, which could any ways render me obnoxious to the state. That far from having corresponded with CRATIPPUS, it appeared from the letter itself, that I had not answered one which he had wrote to me. That the passage, wherein he mentioned the *coincidence of our employments*, referred only to the collections of curious statues and pictures, which we both made in our travels. That the rest of the letter was nothing but news of an indifferent nature, which there was no law to prevent one friend from communicating to another. Several of my Athenian friends did me the honour to testify, that my behaviour during above four years residence in the city had been very fair and unblameable; and that neither from my acquaintance, conversation, or actions, I had given the least suspicion of carrying on any practices against the state. By this means I got rid of a troublesome affair, which I have reason to believe was fomented by CLEON, to revenge himself upon me for a satire against him, in which he suspected I was concerned. The piece which gave him this singular offence, was composed one night at CLINIAS's, at a symposium, where ARISTOPHANES the comic poet and myself were present. When supper was over, being heated with wine, and enlivened by the gaiety of the conversation, we went out in a body, crowned with garlands and with torches in our hands, and sung the farcistical

Iambics under CLEON's windows. But it happens always in a divided state, that when any person is opposed by one side, the party, in whose cause he suffers, take him into their protection; for CLEON's resentment against me excited the zeal of his enemies to represent the prosecution as groundless and malicious.

The season is very unhealthy here, for the great rains, which fell last winter, having stagnated in the low and marshy grounds about the city, are corrupted by the violent heats of the summer, and the air is greatly infected. HIPPOCRATES apprehends another plague. Should that dreadful calamity break out again, I shall beg leave (if the king has no occasion for my service in any other part of Greece) to make a short visit to my family at Ephesus.

Noble scribe, I live in daily expectation of thy letters, which will not be less acceptable to me, than the chearing rays of MITHRAS are to the bosom of the hard earth, which has felt the severity of the winter's frosts. Adieu.

P.

L E T T E R XCII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Memphis

I have always thought, CLEANDER, that one of the principal ends of travelling was to know the laws and policies of other countries; and that many wise and excellent things might be learnt from the usages and institutions of foreign nations, which were wanting in our own. In the appointment of laws for the well-ordering of mankind, a regard has been every where had to certain unchangeable principles in the nature of things, which previous to any human laws inferred an universal obligation upon all rational creatures. But it was the depravity of mankind, that made the authority of the human law-giver necessary, and caused the sanction of civil punishments to be superadded to the primary obligation, which our natural sense of right and wrong inculcated upon us. And without this provision the ends of our entering into society could not be answered; for though the things, that are naturally good or evil, seem obvious to the common reason of all men, yet the bulk of human race would not in all instances be capable of discerning them. And unless such things, as are obligatory in their own nature, were further enjoined by human laws, many would be ignorant of their obligation to them; and many, who know what they should do, would nevertheless, to excuse themselves, pretend ignorance. For which reason I applaud the wisdom of our own legis-

lature * in punishing ingratitude, a kind of immorality the most odious in its nature, however it happens to have escaped the censure of the laws in other countries. It may indeed be said, ingratitude is not of the same nature with those crimes, which do open violence to the rights of mankind, and tend directly to destroy the being of society. Yet I shall always believe, what I was early taught to maintain in the schools of Persia, that the wretch who is capable of ingratitude, has broke loose from every tie, that engages us to our friends, our parents, or our country.

In speaking of the Ægyptian laws, the consideration of which has led me to this subject, there are two or three, that I shall first mention, which are established upon sure and unerring principles of reason and truth; and the sanction of which seems to be prescribed or limited according to the moral differences of things. † The first is “that whoever kills another wilfully, whether the person he kills be a bond-slave or a free man, shall suffer death.” For the malignity of this crime consists in the injustice of the action, and the malice and cruelty of the person who commits it; and however the quality of the suffering party may differ, the malice, cruelty, and injustice of the action is still the same. For the further security of the innocent against the indirect attempts and secret villainy of mischievous and designing men, it is by law appointed, “that false accusers shall suffer the same punishment, which the falsely accused were to have undergone, had they been convicted of the offence.” A plain principle of natural justice, that the innocent should not suffer with the guilty, prescribes to them another of their

* XENOPH. Cyropæd.

† DIOD. SICUL. L. I. c. 6.

laws, "that women with child, who have incurred the "penalty of death, shall not be executed till they are delivered;" a rule of justice, which ought certainly to be received in every state, and followed by every tribunal, as it has already been received in Greece, and particularly, as I am informed, by the solemn council of Areopagus. I more wonder, that this principle of natural justice should ever have been violated in the laws of any country, than that it is adhered to so strictly in this. * I have often thought, CLEANDER, that custom in Persia, which for the perfidy and treason of one person dooms his whole family, with all the innocent branches of it, to utter extirpation, a most unjust appointment, and cruelty to the highest excess. Pardon me, my friend, this freedom of censuring the laws of that state, to which I am attached by every solemn tie, and to whose laws I shall always pay the strictest obedience. The wretch, who betrays his allegiance to his prince, without doubt deserves the severest tortures. But why must the innocent and the guilty be involved in the same punishment? I fear the natural injustice of such a sentence can hardly be palliated upon the reason commonly alledged, that the punishment is enhanced to the guilty by being extended to all who are so unfortunate as to be allied to him. I am strongly sensible of the horrid nature of this crime, and am persuaded men ought to be deterred by the severest examples from attempting it. Yet I cannot understand, why those, who are no sharers in the guilt, should suffer more than they do in the punishment of the guilty person, for that, which is of itself the greatest calamity to

* JUSTIN. L. X. c. 2. AMMIAN. MARCELL. L. XXIII. c. 31. *Leges apud Persas impendio formidatæ, inter quas diritate exuperant latæ contra ingratos & desertores. Abominandæ aliæ, per quas ob noxam unius omnis propinquitas perit.*

any family to happen in it. A whole kindred in this case is destroyed at random; and some perhaps among them, who, if spared, might from the awe of so near an example, as well as the goodness of their own nature, have distinguished themselves more signally for their loyalty to their sovereign, than the criminal person had done for his perfidy and treason. If the punishment of the criminal is thought likely to raise resentment from the family, and put them, who are left, upon meditating revenge; yet will not men naturally be more desperate, when without any regard had to their own innocence they are destined to suffer for another's offence? I have reasoned with great freedom upon the matter; but the few instances we have of this law's being executed in its full rigour, since the unhappy fate of † INTAPHERNES in the reign of DARIUS, warrants me to believe, that it has appeared just and equitable to the lenity of our mighty monarchs to mitigate the severity of it. † Alike severe in its kind is another law we have against deserters. But if the infliction of severity is never the principal end of punishments, and a regard ought to be had in them as well to the reformation of the offender, where that may be, as to the putting a restraint upon other men; I should think the case of deserters better provided for by the laws of Ægypt than by those of Persia. For amongst other excellent rules of military discipline, it was appointed by SESOSTRIS, "that soldiers, who mutinied or fled from
 " their colours, though not punished with death, should
 " be degraded from their post, and stigmatized in the
 " most public manner with all possible marks of disgrace,
 " and yet be permitted to resume again their military cha-

* HEROD. L. III. c. II9.

† AMMIAN. MARCELL. loco jam citato.

“racter, if they wiped off that disgrace afterwards by “some brave and valorous action.” By this he intended, that dishonour and infamy should be looked upon as the greatest evils, and more grievous than death itself. He considered also, that those, who were put to death, could never be further serviceable to their country; but such as were degraded only, might, for the shame they had incurred through their past misconduct, and from a desire to recover their reputation, exert themselves with redoubled vigour, and be the more useful for the time to come. These are instances, **CLEANDER**, of such laws, as have a moral fitness in their own nature; and the form and sanction of each seems to be prescribed or limited from the nature of the thing itself. But with regard to laws in general, it must be observed, that though they are all founded upon one natural principle of virtue being rewardable and vice punishable, yet the particular kind of sanction is not always so clearly pointed out from the nature of the thing itself, but left to the discretion of the lawgiver to appoint. And therefore, though the offence in itself be naturally punishable, the positive part of the law, which determines the punishment, however wisely designed, may not be universally binding. If then the laws of this country in some instances appear singular, we are to consider, how well they answer the thing proposed; they may not be less wise, because in those circumstances, which are arbitrary and positive, they differ from our own. It is the institution of this country to punish perjury with death: the punishment is indeed arbitrary; but if we reflect upon the heinousness of the crime, that it is the most daring impiety against the gods, and a violation of the strongest bands of faith amongst men, we shall have less reason to think it disproportionate to the offence.

The laws of nature seem in general to require, that he, who hath unjustly taken away the life of another, should himself be put to death. But when this heinous crime is attended with other aggravating circumstances; when the offender hath violated the strictest ties of blood, besides the common ties of nature, especially if he has taken away the life of those, who were the authors of life to him; all nations are agreed to punish such execrable impiety not only with death, but with the most lingering kinds of it, and the severest tortures they could invent. For it has always been esteemed the wickedest act that men could be guilty of, to take away the lives of them, from whom they received their own. But when a case happens the reverse of this, "that a parent shall destroy its offspring," it is surely an horrid and unnatural act, and equally unjust as the other. For although the parent be the instrument of giving life to its child, yet have they no better right to take that life away than the child has to take away the life of its parent. But it has been thought, that the violating that natural awe and veneration, which is due from the child to the parent, aggravates the heinousness in the act in the former instance, which does not in the latter; and that regard should be had to this difference in determining the punishment. And upon this the Ægyptian law seems to be founded relating to such parents, and is indeed a pretty remarkable one, "That parents, who killed their children, should not die themselves, but be forced for three days and nights together to hug them continually in their arms, and have a guard all the while over them to see they did it." This was doubtless thought a punishment, which would be attended with the deepest sorrow and compunction. The inexpressible horror and remorse that the wretch must feel upon the occasion, it was thought, would be as effectual to deter men from

the unnatural act, as even death itself. By the law of this country "if any upon the road saw a man likely to be killed, and did not rescue him, being able, he was to die for it; and if he were not able to defend him, yet he was bound to discover the ruffians, and to prosecute them in a due course of law: If he neglected this, he was to be scourged with a certain number of stripes, and to be kept without food for three days together." The sanctions of this law are arbitrary and positive; but the law goes upon a supposition in the first instance, that he, who being able, did not defend the assaulted person from violence, was accessory to the violence committed upon him; and the neglect punishable in the second, is his not having done all he might in order to discover the ruffians, and bring them to justice. Yet it must be owned, the penalties in this law are exceeding strict, and would, I fear, be in many instances unjust. A like positive sanction belongs to these other laws, "That such as revealed the secrets of the army to the enemy were to have their tongues cut out. That they who coined false and adulterated money, or contrived false weights or counterfeited seals, and scriveners who forged deeds, or razed public records, or produced any forged contracts, were to have both their hands cut off." Which all go upon this notion, that every one ought to suffer in the part wherewith he had offended, in such a manner as not to be repaired during life. And so in the case of adultery, the woman was to lose her nose, that she might be punished in that part where her charms chiefly lay.

Now as there are some things, which being not of absolute and universal obligation, are nevertheless fit and convenient in certain instances, and some, which as the exigencies of human affairs require, are necessary to be

provided for only at particular times and in particular places; the laws relating to these things are not of a mixt nature, but merely positive both as to the matter and form. By a law of this sort all the Ægyptians are enjoined to give in their names in writing to the governors of the provinces, shewing how and by what means they got their livelihood. "He, who gave a false account "in such a case, or if it appeared he lived by robbery, or "any other unjust means, was to die." This certainly was well calculated to promote honest industry, and prevent public mischiefs and disorders in the state. But there is one concerning theft of a most extraordinary sort, which I will mention under this head. It may seem indeed to countenance iniquity; but was intended for the benefit and redress of the plundered, when the other laws were found ineffectual to put a stop absolutely to that evil, which Ægypt from the nature of the country hath always been exposed to. For the slime and mud, which are brought by the waters in the annual inundation, settling in different parts of the Nile, and the lakes, which are caused from time to time by its overflowing the country, make those little islands of rushes, which have always given concealment to these bands of robbers, that infest the country. As it was thought impossible therefore to put a stop to this evil entirely, a law appoints, "That those who enter into these infamous "companies, shall give in their names to one, who is "their chief, and whatever they steal shall engage to bring "to him. They, who have been robbed, are to set "down in writing every particular, expressing the day, "and hour, and place, when and where they lost their "goods, and apply to this receiver, who, though well "known, is connived at by the state; and after a "valuation made of the stolen goods, the true owner

“ is to pay a fourth part of the value, and to receive them
“ again.”

But for fear of being tedious, I will enlarge no farther on this subject; nor shall I take upon me to defend the last institution, as I can never think it prudent or adviseable to give a licence to evils, in order to restrain them. But the Ægyptian laws must be allowed upon the whole to be wise and equitable, and worthy of commendation. * And that these laws may upon no occasion be evaded by the collusion of the parties charged with the execution of them, extraordinary care is taken to fill the courts of justice with persons of the most approved integrity and unblemished character. The prophet or high priest of Ægypt is always president in the tribunal of justice, or over the thirty, who are appointed for the hearing of all causes. In judiciary proceedings the plaintiff exhibits his complaint in writing, distinctly and particularly setting forth wherein he was injured, and after what manner, and the value of the damage sustained. The defendant on the other side, having had a copy of his adversary's libel, answers in writing to every particular, either by denying, or justifying, or pleading something in mitigation of damages. The plaintiff replies in writing, and the defendant rejoins. After the litigants have thus exhibited their libels twice, it belongs to the thirty judges to consider among themselves what sentence they shall pronounce. Then the prophet turns the effigies of truth towards the party who carries his cause. The judges used to receive a certain salary from the king, which is still continued to them by the favour of our mighty monarch out of the revenues of Ægypt: and he may justly be regarded as the

* DODD, L. I. c. 6.

guardian of their laws, who suffers them to enjoy their own judicatures in all causes, except where the rights of his natural subjects are concerned. * The priests say, that their ancient MNEVIS or MENES was the first who instituted written laws; and that his laws are preserved among the other sacred treasures of wisdom, that have been delivered down to them from the great MERCURY, his associate and counsellor. The rest have at different times been received into the *Hermaic* books, and the highest honour thereby paid to the authors of them. SESOSTRIS is generally reputed the founder of all those that relate to military discipline. The Theban BOCCHORIS is justly famed for his wise and excellent laws concerning contracts and debts, and for the preventing of excessive usury. He forbids imprisonment for debt, judging it unreasonable, that the persons of men should lie at the mercy of inexorable creditors, or be confined to gratify the covetousness or resentment of private people, when they might be of use to the public service. Many of the Ægyptian laws have been copied by the sages of Greece, who all resorted hither as to the fountain-head of knowledge and wisdom; and this rule in particular, I am informed, is followed in the Athenian laws of SOLON. The kings of Ægypt from the times of SESOSTRIS, after the prodigious increase of their power and greatness, became impatient of controul; and the strict laws, which the wise founders of the Ægyptian polity † had appointed for the regulation of their conduct in every instance both of public and private life, were now grown obsolete and forgot, till BOCCHORIS ‡ endeavoured to revive the ancient discipline, and enforce by

* DOD. L. I. c. 7.

† DOD. L. I. c. 6. initio.

‡ ——— τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας πάντα — ἐξακριβῶσαι. Ibid. c. 7.

his own example those excellent rules, which were calculated for the mutual happiness both of the prince and people. But the invasion, that happened in his reign, too soon overturned his laudable designs. * The law which enjoins, that the Ægyptians shall give in their names to the governors of the provinces, shewing by what means they got their livelihood, and that yearly, was enacted by AMASIS. DARIUS the father of XERXES is held in much veneration here, and his name is inrolled among those of their best princes and greatest benefactors. He confirmed the body of their old laws, and added new ones to it. He shewed great indulgence to the Ægyptian priests, to make them amends for the impiety of his predecessor CAMBYSES in the profanation of their religious rites. He was initiated into their mysteries, and resided for some time in the colleges of Heliopolis and Memphis. Whilst living, they esteemed him as a god; and when dead, the people allowed him all those ancient honours, which were customary to be performed to the former kings of Ægypt after their deaths.

I have resided in this country much longer than I intended at my first setting out from Persia; but after I had taken some pains to survey the famous monuments of the Upper Ægypt, and the lasting remains of these once powerful kingdoms, I was willing to make some enquiry into their history, their laws, and their ancient learning. And when I found my curiosity would detain me in these parts, I took the opportunity of being instructed in those liberal sciences, which are the boasted inventions of Ægypt, and are no where taught to

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* HEROD. L. II. 177.

to greater advantage. But now having thrice seen the inundation of the Nile, I begin to think, though with reluctance, of leaving the country. But before I set forward for Pelusium, I intend a short excursion to the Pyramids, with the famous HERODOTUS, and some other Grecian strangers, who are lately arrived at Memphis. Adieu.

L.

L E T T E R X C I I I .

HIPPIAS to CLEANDER.

I find myself in such a debating humour, that you must indulge me, brother, in arguing upon some other particulars of your conversation with the Athenian, than those to which I have already spoken. The two advantages of monarchy, which you mentioned, deserve to be insisted on more copiously, viz. The opportunities of munificence, which are lodged in the hands of a great king, and the awe of his absolute power. Nor had your friend so much cause to triumph in the force and clearness of his reasoning.

The wisest legislators in all republics have established their laws by the sanction of rewards and punishments; because the expectation of the one, or apprehension of the other, is apt to operate most strongly on the human mind. But it often happens in governments of the popular form, that these sanctions are weakened. Envy occasions a neglect of merit, and defeats it of those honours to

which it has an equitable claim, while many restraints on the iniquity of the powerful are taken off by their influence on the body of the people. And thus the intention of the legislator, who first formed the commonwealth, is gradually forgot after his death, or openly perverted by his successors. On the contrary, in monarchical states there is the same perpetual legislator, because a king (unlike the temporary legislators, who preside in democracies, whose interests must vary according to the different circumstances of the times) will always find himself in the same situation and interests with those who have gone before him. He may be a faithful guardian of the laws and these sanctions: and a prudent prince will maintain them in their full vigour; he will not suffer them to be wrested to the low purposes of jealousy and malice, or to strengthen the hands of a faction. Disdaining to act like the inconsistent multitude in the democracy of Athens, he will countenance the deserving with his power, and encourage them by his bounty, while the designing are unable to evade his penetration, or fly from the rigour of his justice. In commonwealths the recompence at any time bestowed on the good citizen is mean and inconsiderable, and rather gratifies the vanity, than advances the interest of the man. But in monarchies the rewards given to a faithful subject are such, as call for his attention and regard. The prospect of them will incite him to endure toil, and the possession of them will animate him to face danger and death in the service of his country. Is a crown of fading oak leaves to be compared with the gift of an extended domain? Is the most elegant collation which the Prytaneum of Athens can afford, equal in value to the wealth, dignity, and titles, which the sovereign of Asia may heap on those, whom he vouchsafes to favour? These rewards

he may not only impart to the man, whose merit more immediately demanded them, but even suffer them to continue in his family, and be transmitted to his remotest posterity. This spirit of liberality hath prevailed very eminently in the kings of Persia. CYRUS, when he had subdued the world, and settled his empire in security, enriched and aggrandized the attendants on his fortune beyond their most sanguine expectations; and no one ever exceeded XERXES in the princely generosity of his temper. Do you think, when he seated himself on the top of the mountain Ægaleos, that he might survey the battle of Salamis; do you think, I say, when he wrote down the name and country of every man who behaved well in the fleet, that he had not an intention to distinguish the valour of his officers and the dexterity of his sailors, with some tokens of the royal esteem? He steadily preserved his intention. He recompensed the sincere, though unsuccessful endeavours of his servants; and many in Persia at this day enjoy the effects of his munificence.

But you will say, that I have hitherto in the tenor of my argument supposed a king perfect in the arts of policy, and in all the regal qualifications. Methinks I hear you telling me, that I have taken it for granted, that every prince is a philosopher; whereas nothing is more true than the reverse of it, because providence has not made them superior to others in their natural endowments, and their acquired ones are seldom so good. Permit me, brother, to answer, that I mean chiefly to confine my observations to Persia; and however this remark may be verified in many countries, I am free from all apprehensions, lest the throne of CYRUS should be filled with a CAMBYSES for the future, the wildest and most uncultivated mortal, who hath dared in any period of time to be ambitious. Thou knowest, that the excellent

ARTAXERXES has established a noble method of education for those, who are to succeed to the empire. The young heir is committed to the management of four persons, who are very remarkable in the kingdom on account of their wisdom and their virtue. The first is ordered to instruct him in the principles of Magianism and the Persian government ; the second must enure him to a love of justice and truth ; the third is to teach him the mastery over himself and his passions ; and the last endeavours to fortify his breast with courage and resolution. Under an absolute prince thus instituted, what signifies the power of doing harm, when the will shall be wanting ? What happiness may we not reasonably hope for and promise to ourselves, under a long race of wise and equitable kings ? Such will be indeed the living images of the deity, the faithful dispensers of his bounty. Reflect only, how much more consistent it is with the general welfare of society, that a prudent man should be placed at the head of it, than that a lawless and giddy multitude should be entrusted with the government. Is it not better they should enjoy freedom and security through the means of such monarchs, than that the reins of power should be held by themselves, which will now be unseasonably straitened, and now wantonly relaxed in their hands ? Do you not find this peculiarly the case in Athens ? Is not their punishment of the best in the city, on observing the least error in a course of the wisest conduct, a flagrant instance of the one, and is not their giving into the foolish politics and absurd propositions of the worst, a ridiculous instance of the other ?

Let us, I beseech you, bring the comparison between monarchies and democracies still nearer. The former is allowed on all hands to possess the greatest advantages, when it is necessary to make a vigorous and sud-

den effort of power. A monarch may conceal the secret of his designs from the knowledge of his enemies; he may deliberate with coolness, and act with spirit; he may attend solely to the reason and policy of his measures, without being misled by the false glosses of his counsellors, without being heated by an orator's address to his passions. In republics the case is far different; they are slow in resolving, much slower in performing; the same secrecy cannot be preserved, nor the same uniform measures pursued; the voice of reason is lost in the noise of eloquence, and reality is basely disguised by plausibility. A good monarch is sensible, that his own welfare is united with the welfare of his people; he knows the security of his crown depends on their affection; he will not therefore indulge his ministers in any selfish views and inclinations, which may injure the prosperity of himself and his kingdom. In popular states little interests and private competitions too frequently enter into the public councils: each man aims at power, riches, and the ruin of his enemies, under the mask of zeal for his country; and the true interest of the many is sacrificed through their own blindness to that of the few. What various opportunities of encouraging the liberal arts, improving the finances, and extending the commerce of his empire, are in the disposal of a monarch? But the ministers, who preside in democracies, have no leisure to regard these important particulars; they are obliged to neglect no expedient, however wretched or detestable, in order to maintain themselves in authority. This is their chief business, and the worthy employment of their administration. How little then ought we to admire those governments, where the spirit of *faction* is mistaken for the spirit of *freedom*; and that, which constitutes the real happiness and grandeur of a nation, is surrendered, not for the sake of liberty, but licentiousness, which is always ac-

compained with sedition, and must naturally end in destruction?

A wise king will respect the advice of a wise council; at the same time he will be a check over their conduct, and prevent them from caballing together to the oppression of their inferiors, or quarrelling with one another to the disorder and confusion of the state. To speak plainly, he will convey to his people the advantages of aristocracy, without the inconveniencies which may sometimes attend it.

Let it be granted there is one dangerous circumstance in monarchy, I mean, that its corruption is *tyranny*; but let it be remembered, there is one much more dangerous in a republic, I mean, that not only its corruption is *anarchy*, (which every one must allow,) but that it is equally exposed to tyranny. For if tyranny consists in the power and the will to inflict stripes, and slavery in the necessity to receive them when inflicted; then the many may tyrannize over the few, the stronger may crush the weaker, in democracies. In this last case the tyranny will be much more open and effectual than in the first, because a single tyrant will be afraid, lest he should enflame the resentment of his people; but a majority of tyrants will be restrained by no such prudential consideration. Under monarchcal governments, if the subjects find themselves oppressed by their king, despair will furnish them with arms; they will join in the common cause, and dethrone him, who has prostituted the dignity of his office, and forfeited the allegiance of his people. They will then place a worthier in his stead; nor need they in the mean time be afraid of invasions from without, since no one would dare to attack a nation united within. But in popular states the few, and consequently

the weaker, after several unsuccessful struggles, will perceive they are unable to redress their grievances: they will therefore ask the assistance of foreigners; sooner than be in bondage to their fellow citizens, they will court the yoke of a stranger, and submit their country and themselves to the mercy of a conqueror.

In an evening conference at Olympia on this subject you declared, "no simple form of government could be free from inconveniencies: that one mixed out of the three species would secure to mankind the benefits, and correct the disadvantages arising from each of them." And you told me, that you had once intimated these sentiments in a letter to GOBRYAS." What that great statesman might think upon the scheme, you could not inform me; for he wisely and like a statesman concealed it. But art thou not of opinion, my CLEAN-
DER, that a frame of government so excellently contrived is rather to be commended in theory, than established in practice, and may take place in the heads of philosophers, but not in societies of men; It would be as difficult to settle the nice boundaries between liberty and prerogative, as to adjust the exact limits between vice and virtue. The preservation of such a tender and delicate constitution must depend on that, which would at certain times be unsteady and unequal, namely, the wisdom of the governors in not extending the powers of either too far. The situation of these with respect to each other would resemble that of two princes, whose territories are contiguous. If the one advances his forces to the frontiers of the other, he gives a just and well grounded alarm to his neighbour. In short, to suppose such a mixture either probable or possible, and that it will ever be admitted and maintained in a nation, is to suppose mankind a different order of beings from what they

are; or that the gracious OROMASDES will one day or other throw a much larger share of reason into the scale of human nature, than is now laid in the balance, and suffer it to weigh down the passions.

C.

L E T T E R XCIV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

ÆSCHYLUS (of whom I spoke so much to thee in my last *) is said to have distinguished himself in the three battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea. In the second of these engagements his younger brother AMYNIAS commanded a squadron of ships, and had the first prize decreed him after the victory. It was to the reputation of this man, that ÆSCHYLUS owed his life. Having been accused for some bold strokes of impiety in one of his tragedies, the Areopagites were just ready to pronounce sentence. AMYNIAS stepped up to the judges in that instant, pulled his arm from under his garment, and shewed it in the face of the court without a hand, that having been lost, as he declared, in the service of his country. The merit of the soldier gained the immediate acquittal of the poet; and ÆSCHYLUS was ashamed of being pardoned, not for his own virtue, but the valour of his brother. A few years after he repented highly the affront, which had been put on him by the judges of the theatre, in per-

* Letter LXXXVII.

mitting SOPHOCLES, who had been formerly his scholar, to carry away the palm in tragedy, at the festival, which celebrated the recovery of THESEUS's bones. CIMON gave his sanction to this determination; and ÆSCHYLUS retired from Athens, after his defeat, to Gela in Sicily; where he arrived, while king HIERO was building the city Ætna. He addressed himself to his new patrons in a play, which bore the name of that town, and was employed in prophetically describing the future commerce, wealth, and grandeur of the place. As he was walking one day in the fields to refresh himself in the air after the fatigue of a rehearsal, an eagle with a tortoise in its claws accidentally flew over his head, and (as the Sicilians relate it) soaring high with her prey, and wanting some stone whereon to break it, mistook ÆSCHYLUS's bald crown for a flint, and threw it down upon him in such a manner as dashed out his brains. THEMISTOCLES had such a regard to his performances, that after the death of ÆSCHYLUS, he contracted with PHRYNICHUS for the representation of several of them.

In the mean time SOPHOCLES improved his credit over all Greece. He was held in esteem not only as a tragic writer, but as a counsellor; and the highest offices in the state were sometimes conferred upon him. I have heard him speak of his expedition to Samos in joint commission with PERICLES; but that great general said of him, that in his military capacity (whatever he might be in his poetical) he had more personal bravery than conduct. PHILEMON has a good story of his being one day in company with them in the forum, while they continued together in office, and were talking carelessly on matters of indifference; an handsome virgin pass'd by them in the middle of the conference. SOPHOCLES took notice of her beauty, and PERICLES reproved him

saying, "a magistrate should observe continence with his eyes as well as his hands." Though he is far advanced in years, he continues to apply himself to his profession with an unwearied application. I was myself present at a very extraordinary trial, not many months ago, in which he was concerned before the court of Areopagus. The sons of SOPHOCLES desired the guardianship of their father's estate, as of one, who was grown delirious, and consequently no longer able to manage his affairs. The old gentleman spoke in his own defence with a peculiar vivacity and strength of understanding. As soon as he had closed his oration, which fell from him with an uncommon flow of natural eloquence and grace of pronounciation, he begged leave to read a tragedy, which he had just finished, and would speedily offer to the public. It was entitled OEDIPUS at Colonus, and was designed to do honour to his native town. He recited it, and then desired to know, with some warmth of temper and quickness of expression, whether that piece was the work of a madman or a fool. The judges applauded his wit, dismissed him with the highest marks of honour, and actually declared his sons madmen for accusing him.

EURIPIDES, another great master in the dramatic art, and the rival of ÆSCHYLUS and SOPHOCLES, was brought up by his father to exercises of strength and activity, and designed for nothing more than a wrestler in the Olympic games. His inclinations lay another way, and he proved a constant disciple of ANAXAGORAS in philosophy, and of PRODICUS in rhetoric. Since that he has turned his thoughts to the writing of tragedies, and has one happiness, which men of parts are generally strangers to, that of being as remarkable for his industry

as his genius. During the last Athenæa I was present at his Bellerophon, wherein he hath introduced a wicked man seriously preferring lucre to honesty in a train of studied arguments. Though for my own part I was struck with an aversion to the character and the sentiments, yet I could not think it right to pass sentence on the poet, till the catastrophe of the piece. The impatient audience however were rising up with a kind of Bacchanalian fury, to demolish both the play and the actor. EURIPIDES came on, and bowed, as if desirous to speak. His request was granted, and he told us, "he could not help observing, with a secret transport, the virtue and integrity of that great assembly; and should always endeavour to follow in his particular capacity the national example." He added, "that if they would wait quietly to the end of the tragedy, they would find he had not failed in expressing his abhorrence for iniquity, since the patron of covetousness would there meet with the punishment he deserved." SOCRATES frequents no plays, but those of EURIPIDES. I saw him in a corner of the theatre on this occasion; and while the soliloquy was reciting, his face seemed composed into a settled detestation of the odious panegyric; but his features afterwards lighted up again, and he was greatly satisfied with the spirit and behaviour of his friend EURIPIDES. ARCHELAUS king of Macedon had heard so much of this great poet, that he sent him an invitation to his kingdom. In conversation he told EURIPIDES, "he should be very proud, if he would compose a tragedy in honour of his character." To which the other replied with great politeness, "Pray heaven, your majesty may never be the subject of a tragedy!" A courtier laughed at him one day for the stinking of his breath; "If my breath stinks, replied he, it is

"because so many honest secrets have rotted within
"me."

The general opinion of the Athenians on the excellencies of these three competitors seems founded in an exact and impartial review of them. *ÆSCHYLUS* is thought to want neither spirit nor sublimity, but is censured as bombast and inflated. *SOPHOCLES* has united the perfections of art to the graces of nature, and has a juster degree of elevation than his master, with more delicacy and sweetness. *EURIPIDES* is rather fond of elegance and tenderness, than strength and grandeur; and has a fine way of interspersing the reflections of morality, without flattening the dialogue, or relaxing the attention of his audience from the main action.

Comedy had the same rise with tragedy; and though *SU-SARION* and *EPICARMUS* are said to have been the first inventors of it, yet *EUPOLIS* and *CRATINUS* pretend to a share in the merit. The former was seventeen years of age, when he entered on the theatre, and raised his credit by abusing both *CIMON* and *PERICLES*; but the latter honoured *CIMON*, who was at that time the head of the nobility. The libertinism of comedy is very freely indulged by the impudent poet *ARISTOPHANES*; and I dare say, his scandalous licentiousness will at last convince the Athenians of the necessity of some law to restrain it. It may be said however in favour of tragedy and comedy, that each of these writings have their respective use. The fate of tyranny and anarchy are laid open in the one, and the absurdities and follies of private life are ridiculed in the other.

I find it a question, *HYDASPES*, disputed among the critics of Greece, in which of these it is hardest to excel;

at the same time it is universally acknowledged, that the tragic and comic excellencies are so different, that no man can ever be superior in both. Wilt thou indulge me, while I give thee a reason or two on the side of comedy? The first and most natural, which occurs, is, that it is easier to raise our attention by good sense, than to excite our laughter by wit. The plot of tragedy is already wrought to our hands by the historian; the plot of comedy is derived from the fancy of the poet. The former is conversant in the grave passions of public life, such as avarice, ambition, and sometimes an heroic love. These are easily painted, because great characters are exposed to the observation of all men. The latter chiefly interferes with the workings of the mind in private life, and the little family-intrigues and inconsistencies, which occupy so considerable a share of mankind. These are painted with difficulty, because to gain a thorough knowledge of them requires a very intimate and extensive acquaintance with the world. Our behaviour in public must depend on some virtues and vices, which, though differently blended in different constitutions, are always the same, and have determined ideas annexed to them. Our behaviour in private will depend on the fickleness of our temper, our levities and humours, which can never be defined, and are not only various in various persons, but are hourly jarring and unsettled in the same person. These levities are the chief ingredients in the composition of comedy, as well as they are in that of mankind; and so flutter between vice and virtue, that they are hard to be caught and described. Tragedy is now carried to a degree of perfection, which leaves me no expectation from posterity: but comedy, as by far the most difficult, will admit of much alteration and improvement. In short then, to hit off the passions of comedy with nature and

propriety, to bring them home to every man's own business and bosom, is a task reserved for some genius in a future age, since I assure thee, no one of the present is equal to it.

From Athens.

C.

L E T T E R XCV.

GOBRYAS TO CLEANDER. From Ecbatana.

THE account, which thy last letters brought of the surrender of Mitylene, and the punishment inflicted on its inhabitants, afforded us a strong picture of the temper and politics of the Athenians. And by enlivening thy narrative of facts with reflections on the motives of their conduct, and intermixing particulars of their debates and forms of proceeding, thou continuest to recommend thy diligence and address to the supreme council. I believe I have already informed thee, that thy dispatches are constantly registered in the archives of the empire; and if they are preserved with that care, of which the regular series of our records from the reign of CYRUS is a proof, they will transmit to latest ages the memory of a very able and faithful minister. The king, during the course of his glorious reign, has shewn his grateful sense of his servants merits, by rewarding them with those treasures, which under former ones have been lavished away on the flattering, the servile, and the corrupted dependants on courts; and thy next remittances from TERIBAZUS will shew thee, that thy allow-

ance is considerably augmented. The courier, whom NICANDER sent to Sparta for further instructions, is at last returned; the answer he has brought to our proposals, is drawn up with the true Laconic stateliness and brevity.

The King, Senate, and Ephori of Sparta to ARTAXERXES, King of Persia, health.

WE seek thy alliance not unwillingly; but can do nothing to obtain it, which will dishonour our country in the eyes of Greece. Farewel.

I treated the agent NICANDER with great reserve on this occasion, and only expressed my surprize, that his republic could think it equitable, that the whole hazard and expence of assisting them should lie on our side, whilst they were tied down to no particular stipulations in favour of Persia. In the course of the conference I found he endeavoured to discover, if we were inclined to assist his state with a sum of money, on condition it should be repaid with interest in four years. But I told him plainly (as I was ordered) that I looked upon our negociation as entirely at an end; and that it was indifferent to the king, whether he continued here or departed. I have not seen NICANDER since this conversation, but I do not hear, he designs yet to leave us. I agree entirely, CLEANDER, with thy opinion, that 'tis ill success alone, which must lengthen the monosyllables of Lacedemon. From the intelligence, which thou sentest me concerning PYTHON, I took hold of an opportunity he gave me of entering into some discourse with him. He made an application to me in behalf of a correspondent of his, an Athenian merchant residing at Sidon, who

had been imprisoned by the governor for refusing to submit to an extraordinary tax, which had been laid on all foreign commodities. I assured him, it had been levied without the least authority from hence; and that the king would disclaim the proceeding of his governor, by sending him immediate orders, not only to release the merchant, and repair the damages he had sustained, but to repeal the imposition. I hinted however to PYTHON, that it was inconvenient for the Athenians, not to have an ambassador here to complain of such violences, whenever they happened, and to take care of the interests of the republic at this critical juncture, when they could not be ignorant, that the Lacedemonians shewed a disposition to cultivate an alliance with us to their prejudice. PYTHON appeared very attentive to my discourse, and told me, that he would not fail to inform his correspondent of the relief he had obtained from the king's justice; and that he did not doubt, it would give great satisfaction at Athens.

When thy last letters were read before the council of Seven, they renewed a division, which has for some time prevailed amongst them, and spread generally through the empire, viz. whether Persia should immediately take part in the Peloponnesian war. Some are eager to revenge on one part of the Greeks that disgrace, which they suffered from the whole body of them at Salamis and Platæa. Others think the empire not sufficiently recovered from those deep wounds, and are willing to take time for considering, which part of the Greeks it will be our interest to support. The younger counsellors and the military men declare for the first opinion; and as they have formed an high idea of the Spartan bravery, incline to their interest. The wisest and most experienced

fatraps, and even those among our officers, who have grown old in the service, advise us to pursue the latter scheme. The worst is, that he, whom both his abilities and integrity render the fittest to direct our councils, I mean MEGABYZUS, declines more and more in his health; the consumptive state of body, under which he has laboured for two years, grows daily upon him. No air suits him but that of the forest of Nisa; and I believe he will be unable to attend the court in their removal to Susa.

I know not, if thou hast yet been acquainted with the remarkable events, which have fallen out within the compass of a few months in the northern provinces. Several complaints having been sent up against ARIAZUS, the governor of Sogdiana, he was ordered to repair to court forthwith to justify his conduct. Instead of complying, he pretended at first, that sickness prevented his taking so long a journey; but that he hoped, the reply he made in writing to the accusations of his enemies would be a sufficient apology for his behaviour. His defence was found to be so evasive and trifling, that a second order was sent him by an Astanda, to set out within a day after the receipt of it, if he would not be reckoned a criminal; and at the same time OCHUS's lieutenant in Bactria, SPITAMENES, was commanded to draw together a body of troops towards the frontiers of Sogdiana. ARIAZUS soon discovered his criminal intentions; he imprisoned the Astanda, seized the revenues of the province, entered into a correspondence with OXYATHRES, who had taken refuge at the Scythian court, and broke out into an open revolt. By the persuasions of the latter, TAXILAS the Scythian king was prevailed upon to send to the assistance of ARIAZUS a body of thirty thousand men, who crossed the Tanais, and joined him at

Gaza. The laws of nations were violated, and our ambassador ARSANES put under arrest for remonstrating strongly against this open infraction of treaties. SPITAMENES, without staying for the reinforcements, which the governors of Parthia and Hyrcania were preparing to send him, ventured a battle near Cyropolis. He put himself at the head of his troops, and pushed the van of the rebels very rigorously; but receiving a mortal wound from a Scythian bow in the beginning of the engagement, his troops were defeated, and obliged to repass the Oxus. Affairs on this side put on for some time a bad aspect; but the over-ruling OROMASDES would not suffer the reign of our Great Monarch to be long sullied with the prosperity of a rebel. For the Scythian king being killed by a fall from his horse, as he was hunting, his son CLEOPHAS, who succeeded him, not only released our ambassador, and recalled his forces, but assured us, in the strongest terms, of his resolution to adhere strictly to his alliances with Persia, and that in pursuance of them he had ordered OXYATHRES to depart his country. To deal freely with thee, this sudden turn proceeds not so much from the natural disposition of the young prince, as the influence of his favourite ARGASPES, who has felt the effect of our master's liberality. ARIAZUS's army, discouraged by the retreat of the Scythian forces, mutinied against him; and BESSUS, one of his officers, had the boldness to assassinate him, as he was sleeping in his tent, and sent up his head to court.

I have now performed the duty of a minister, in laying before thee the present state of our affairs; but I should ill discharge the offices of a friend, if I did not assure thee of the continuance of my regard for thee by a small present.

of oriental curiosities, which the next ship will bring thee from Ephesus.

Thou mayst likewise be satisfied, that whenever thou art tired of thy hazardous employment, I will exert my utmost endeavours to procure thee a secure and honourable establishment in Persia. Adieu.

P.

L E T T E R XCVI.

CLEANDER to ORSAMES. From Athens.

HOW agreeably do your letters, most noble ORSAMES, lead my imagination through all the mazes of Ægyptian learning! How awful is the form of science concealed beneath the veil of sacred rites! But how rational is the delight she gives us, when divested of her hieroglyphic dress, and stript of that disguise, which gains her the veneration of the ignorant and admiring multitude! Upon this principle, the Eleusinian mysteries are calculated to inspire a reverential curiosity, which makes the mind more deeply attentive to those truths, the knowledge of which it has with much difficulty attained. But why do I talk of truths, when all I can tell you is of outward shews? For I have not been admitted myself to a participation of these ceremonies; and yet methinks, if I am not widely mistaken in my guess, whoever is an hearer of the divine SOCRATES cannot be entirely ignorant of the doctrines taught in them,

though he himself has hitherto refused the initiation even to his discredit; perhaps to avoid a more dangerous suspicion of discovering out of treachery, what he has already learnt by the inspiration of an excellent nature. But of this hereafter. I imagine you will not be displeased with a particular account of the external ceremonies, of which I have lately been a spectator. They begin on the fifteenth of the month *Βοδρομαίῳ* by a general assembly of the candidates for initiation, who on the second purify themselves in the sea, and are employed on the third in offering sacrifices of little pomp, and therefore not worth describing. The fourth day is distinguished by a solemn procession, in which the holy basket of CERES is carried in a consecrated car, drawn by four milk white oxen, whose necks and horns are wreathed with garlands of corn and poppies. They pass along amidst the acclamations of the multitude, who resound the praises of CERES; and are followed by a train of beautiful young women, representing the companions of PROSERPINE. Their garments are gaily embroidered with all sorts of wild flowers; and on their heads they bear the mystic baskets, which are concealed from every eye beneath long veils of purple. "Yet however your curiosity may be excited by this concealment, said the young ALCIBIADES to me, believe me, who am an initiate, the veils cover nothing half so much worth seeing, as those faces, to which they give a becoming shade." On the fifth evening is commemorated the search of PROSERPINE, when CERES snatching with a torch the flames of Ætna, ran with uncertain steps to seek her daughter. The air is illuminated with the blaze of ten thousand torches, and great is the contest, who shall consecrate the largest to the service of the goddess. The most remarkable of all the ceremonies was that of the sixth day, when the statue of IACCHUS the son of

JUPITER and CERES is carried in procession from Athens to Eleufis. It fets out from the Ceramicus, and is accompanied with mufic, fongs, and fymphonies of founding brafs, to which the dancers feet keep time, who as well as the ftatue are crowned with myrtle garlands. Thus they ufed to pafs in feftive pomp along the way from thence called fared, and after refting twice enter Eleufis by the myftic gate; but ever fince the beginning of the war they have been forced to conduct their procession by water. The fea is almoft covered with the multitudes of fhining veffels, which are ready to convey the joyful crowds, who are received at Eleufis in a magnificent temple, capable of containing with eafe more than thirty thoufand perfons. The loud notes of the trumpets and clarions are reflected with a fofter echo from the waves; and with thefe the fared bards join hymns of praife to CERES, PROSERPINE, and IACCHUS. The dancers with a nimble bound fkip from one bark to another, and with a thoufand antic geftures exprefs their mimic raptures. I followed in the crowd of boats with SOCRATES and ALCIBIADES. Of the three remaining days that precede the initiation, the firft is paff in games, wherein the victors are rewarded with a meafure of barley, that grain being firft fown in Eleufis; the next in admitting perfons to the initiation of the leffer myfteries; and the laft is called Plemochoai, from a libation made out of two earthen veffels placed towards the eaft and weft, which after the repetition of certain words are thrown down, and their wine fpilt upon the earth. And here what are properly called the myfteries begin: the happy initiates are conducted by the hierophant, who has attended them through all the ceremonies from the very firft day, into the temple of CERES, and the impenetrable gates of fecrecy are fhut againft the profane. For a ftranger, though but by accident, to be prefent at thefe fecret rites

is inevitable death; for an initiate to reveal them, death with infamy. Thus far however may be innocently known of them, that besides the hierophant, whose business through life it is to preside at them, they are attended by five public officers, the chief of whom is one of the archons, bears the title of king, and the day following the mysteries has the care of assembling the senate, to take notice of any irregularities, that have been committed there. The other four are chosen by the people, and called curators. The hierophant or mystagogue has also three assistants of an higher and ten of a lower rank, who are chiefly employed about the sacrifices. Beyond this we know little but from conjecture; but thus much all the conjectures that I have ever heard, agree in, that the secret of these mysteries cannot consist in shews alone, in visions, in frightful noises, and appearances, calculated to astonish women and children indeed, but little capable of answering the raised expectations of the brave and wise, who all are ambitious of being admitted to them. Even in the lesser mysteries many doctrines are inculcated of the highest importance, and conducive to virtue; yet these are but a preparation for the greater, and to them no one is admitted, whose character is blemished with any crime. On this initiation are supposed to depend the favour of the gods and the happiness of a future state. Shall we suppose then, that this degree of happiness and merit is attained by merely beholding a number of strange ceremonies, by attending to the sounds of solemn music, by being in a blaze of light, and on a sudden in total darkness, by answering a few questions of course asked by the hierophant about their previous preparations? Or is it by listening to a sacred doctrine, that shall unfold the sublimest truths of religion, by clearing from their minds the mists of vulgar prejudice, and forming in them just notions of the deity,

the one supreme director of the world, such as he is adored in Persia, such as he is taught in the more public Cretan mysteries, whence that people pretend these and all others to be derived. Such doctrines as these are thought to require the closest secrecy, as being too opposite to a useful popular belief. Such doctrines as these deserve indeed the pomp, with which these mysteries are introduced, as those of all other the most venerable, as those of all others the most important, as those which alone can open the mind to true knowledge, and give a just and constant principle of action. Whether this be the mystery revealed to the initiates or not, let us rejoice, who are in possession of such valuable knowledge; and if we conduct our lives in a manner suitable to it, we need not be perplexed by those fears, with which many are terrified into the initiation, that merely wanting the name of initiates shall condemn us to eternal wretchedness; or indeed that those, who have only the name of it, shall claim any superiority over us in the just determinations of a future state, Farewel,

T,

L E T T E R XCVII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

OROMASDES has established the throne of Persia to maintain our religion above the contempt and insolence of idolaters, who do not like the complexion of our barbarous and inhospitable faith, which, say they, excludes the gods themselves from our cities, and denies them an habitation amongst us.

Should Persia yield to a foreign master, the peculiarity of our religion would add weight to our chains; as the wretched Jews meet with little compassion, and are thought not sufficiently humbled, while they refuse to comply with the worship of their conquerors. This people are well known in the east for their sufferings and inflexible adherence to their religion; for what kingdom has not numerous families of them, the marks of their ancient bondage? Though they are so industrious to reinstate their nation, like a trunk torn up by the violence of a hurricane, in its parent soil, it thrives but a while, and extends its branches only to be lopped and scattered by the sword of a new master. The holiest of the Magi does not more reverently admit the divine presence amongst them, than this people, which they do not presume to circumscribe by the works of their own hands, nor venture to represent any otherwise than by a dazzling glory, an inaccessible brightness, which they assert some

time to have been given as a sensible mark of the Deity's presence; but that the most intimate knowledge of God is the divine irradiation upon the minds of prophets and holy men. They are persuaded of the existence of some evil genii, which are at least coeval with the world, and the dangerous enemies of mankind. They think it no stain to marry amongst their own kindred; and they honour a prophet as the messenger of heaven. The similitude which all this bears to the wisdom of the Magi, is the reason the Jews find their condition very tolerable under a Persian yoke. CYRUS himself, when he reduced the pride of Babylon, treated them favourably, because he found them retaining such venerable doctrines. XERXES burnt the temples of Greece, but permitted them to rebuild their places of worship. Certainly, CLEANDER, pure religion was once universal; and mankind received truth from the same source, whence they derived their being. For this ancient people maintain many uncorrupted traditions, which no change of fortune has ever been able to extort from them. ZADOC is one of these, a person of no mean credit at the court. Upon asking him, on what grounds his countrymen justified their tenacious regard for their religious rites; because said he, they were divinely communicated; and (what is much more difficult to support without evidence) heaven has not altogether broke off the intercourse with us, but at certain periods honours some holy man with the knowledge of its will, who first gains our credit by some notable instance of power, and then confirms us in our religion. Our princes hear his rebukes with decency, and submit to his commands with meekness. They do not profess to make war nor conclude peace by their own strength or counsel, nor dare they assume the honours of success; they are but second in the state, for God is the sovereign. So long as we acknowledge this, we have a

constant and happy testimony of the truth of it; our seasons are ever temperate, our flocks multiply, our vintage never fails, success attends our arms, and our princes rule with wisdom. ZADOC, said I, you forget yourself, and your fancy carries you back to those early times, when man's innocence fitted him for the converse of heavenly genii, who were the vicegerents of God, and openly interposed in the administration of human affairs. But there are now no footsteps in the world of that happy state, and the miserable vicissitudes of your nation leave the least room for expecting to find any there. I do not, replied he, pretend to exempt our nation from the ills of life; no, we are liable to the greatest; for observe the equality of providence, which proportions our duty to our advantages. We are enjoined an hard task for our high privileges, no less than humility in the enjoyment of them; a constant acknowledgment of a precarious dependance, when we seem to be above the stroke of adversity. As God is the disposer of our affairs, he will not permit the aid and devices of men to share in the honour. We are forbid therefore to think ourselves at all necessary to our happiness, either by industry in peace, or conduct and prowess in the field. To reckon up the national forces, and keep exact lists of the soldiery, is laudable œconomy in other states: in us it were a criminal ostentation, and reliance on human aid, (which we profess not to confide in) and has sometimes been followed by a national calamity. Much less should we be tolerated in a defection from the divine worship, or the vile indignity of setting up an idol in our hearts, as his competitor, who has no equal, and will bear no comparison; who calls himself jealous of a rival, a term not more affectionate than terrible to his worshippers.

Now, continued he, you see the tenure of our happiness, and will cease to wonder at our frequent fall from it, since it depends on the steadiness of the human mind, and our perseverance in a national fidelity. Alas ! peace and affluence easily corrupt the heart, and introduce an insensibility of dependance. We, like other nations, soon boast of our achievements, strengthen ourselves with allies, court foreign marriages, (which are forbidden by the law) and in complacency to our new alliances, agree with those nations in their forms of worship. These are the gates, that let in plague, famine, and slavery upon us, and render us the scorn of nations, who upbraid us with not having a knowledge of the true God, or (what is indeed the case) not having virtue enough to deserve his protection. ZADOC, said I, you surprize me much in accusing your nation of levity in religious duties, since you are known to offend in the other extreme; and will not even in captivity be prevailed upon to neglect those ceremonies, which render you obnoxious. You say true, replied he, for captivity renders the mind sober and considerate, and the most cruel tyrant is often unable to extort an unworthy confession from us. But surely you are not at a loss to find the difficulty there is in making so nice a duty, as is required of us, compatible with the wantonness of prosperity. The ways of providence, said I, are not to be pronounced upon with peremptoriness. I will not pretend to say, that its dealings are the same with all nations; but is it possible, that truths of importance should be confined in the custody of an obscure people, within the bounds of Palestine? We are not, returned he, an obscure people; our very misfortunes have prevented that; or if we were, perhaps obscurity and privacy may be less corrupt guardians to treasures of this kind than the refined politics of large empires. Despise not our weakness, SMERDIS; like private

men, states have their vicissitudes; we are still a distinct people, and are continued (so we presume) for greater ends than the present meanness of our condition promises. Great princes have sat on the throne of Palestine, and a greater still may arise, who, like your CYRUS, shall vanquish the nations of the earth with irresistible controul, and retrieve the honours of an ancient people, who can not only fairly trace their ancestry up to those holy patriarchs, whom heaven deigned to spare at the general flood; but pass that common boundary to the annals of other nations, and deduce our origin from the common father of the human race.

Our discourse was much longer; and ZADOC's honest zeal for his religion and nation accompanied him through the whole, conducted, not without some appearance of reason, but not so much but that I said to myself at parting, Good Heaven! what a blessing is hope, which is so hard to be extinguished in the human breast! It is a spark that lives, where there appears no fuel for its support. This people in slavery keep prosperity in view, and (by what I can discern) indulge their imagination with victories to come, and an extended empire in distant ages.

From Balch.

H.

L E T T E R XCVIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THE superiority of the Athenian naval force, if rightly managed, must turn the balance of war in their favour, as (not to put thee in mind of other instances) sufficiently appears from the issue of the Corcyrean troubles. The contests between the Aristocratical and Democratical factions there rose to such a height, that much blood was spilt during the violence of the tumults, in which the people had for the most part the advantage. The party of Oligarchists being apprehensive, that their enemies would take possession of some posts very inconvenient for them, in a fit of rage and despair set fire to the buildings round the forum and harbour. Great quantities of merchandize and other rich effects were consumed in the flames, which spread so wide, that if the wind had not been contrary, the whole city must have been burnt to the ground. The day after this disorder NICOSTRATUS arrived with the Athenian squadron from Naupactus, and soon composed matters to the advantage of his party. The others were disarmed, obliged to deliver up hostages, and four hundred of the chief amongst them confined in the temple of JUNO. Within four or five days after the Peloponnesian fleet, consisting of fifty sail, commanded by ALCIDAS and BRASIDAS, came in sight of the island. The united squadrons of the Corcyreans and Athenians went out to meet them, and began an engagement, which lasted till night. The

former, who had a division amongst their seamen, and brought up but few gallies to fight at a time, were put in great disorder; but the latter behaved with such gallantry, that though they had only 12 ships, they sunk one of the enemy's, and secured the retreat of the Corcyreans. The confusion was so great within the city, that had the Peloponnesians followed the advice of BRASIDAS, and attacked it directly, they would in all probability have been masters of it before morning; but they contented themselves with landing troops, and ravaging the country. This gave the Corcyreans time to recover from their surprize, and take the proper precautions with regard to the Aristocratical party, who meditated a second rising. The arrival of an Athenian fleet of sixty sail obliged ALCIDAS to reembark, and retire into port with no small precipitation, leaving the sea open to the enemy. The Corcyreans, elated with these powerful succours, were determined to take a complete revenge upon the adverse party, and proceeded against them with the most bloody and merciless severities, insomuch that in the space of seven days they extirpated almost all the Aristocratical faction. Fifty of the richest citizens were put to death, according to the forms of law. The others were privately assassinated by their creditors or murdered at the altars, whither they fled for refuge. A large number of these unfortunate men, it is said, were shut up and starved in the temple of BACCHUS. This is the conclusion, noble scribe, of the Corcyrean sedition, which for the time it lasted was as violent as any recorded in history. It is observed to have been the first, which has broke out in this war, founded on the different principles of the Athenian and Lacedemonian governments; but from the animosities which the cruelty wherewith it has been carried on must occasion through all the Grecian states, it is conjectured, that it will not be the last. The

Athenians triumph greatly in their good fortune, and say the Peloponnesians have behaved in this affair with that irresolution and inexperience, which accompany all their naval operations. They imagine, that the success with which in the same year they have quelled the revolt of two considerable islands, secures to them the fidelity of their allies, whom such striking instances must convince, that the Lacedemonian power cannot yet protect them from the weight of Athenian resentment. The grave and pious, with whom I converse, find their joy greatly abated on this occasion by the fatal consequences which they apprehend from these unhappy divisions, as a general disregard to public faith, and a total subversion of humanity and religion in the intercourse between the Grecian states.

The Athenians have this day decreed an assistance of twenty gallies to the Leontines, a people of Sicily of Ionian extract, who are at war with the Syracusians. The chief of the Leontine embassy is GORGAS, a celebrated orator, whose eloquence has had great weight in the assemblies. It is of a new and peculiar kind, abounding in frequent flourishes of fancy, and metaphorical allusions. He has many admirers here. For my own part, I think the style of his orations is rather stiff and affected, than persuasive and elegant, and owes its chief graces to novelty. GORGAS, besides acquiring the reputation of an able negotiator, has considerably improved his fortunes by his Athenian embassy. The whole city resort to hear his rhetorical lectures, and he receives as a gratuity from every disciple, who attends them, no less than an hundred minæ. Though the Athenians in the decree pretend, that their ancient alliance and relation to the Leontines are the reasons which induce them to send these succours, thou mayst easily imagine they are not the principal ones. The real intentions of this state are to prevent the supplies

of corn which their enemies receive from Sicily, and by degrees to get footing there. I know very well, that the fertility and riches of the island, its command of the seas, and the short passage from thence to Italy have long rendered it the object of ambition to the most enterprising politicians. During the administration of PERICLES there were schemes formed to seize upon some part of Sicily; but that great minister always discouraged them, and told those who advised it, that the republic was not powerful enough to undertake an expedition, which besides its own difficulties would infallibly draw upon them the arms of all Greece.

The present rulers, bolder but less prudent than PERICLES, have not (as far as I can learn) laid these views aside, and therefore gladly embrace the opportunity, with which the Leontines furnish them, to introduce Athenian forces into Sicily.

Thy conversation with PYTHON, noble scribe, was extremely well timed; and the relief, which the justice of our monarch afforded to the merchants at Sidon, has given very favourable impressions of the Persian court. They talk of sending thither an embassy of some of their principal citizens. In the mean time a commission has been dispatched to PYTHON to manage their affairs with the Great King, as an agent from Athens. Adieu.

P,

L E T T E R XCIX.

OTANES, chief architect and superintendant of the royal palaces, to CLEANDER.

I have seen thy curiosities in the palace of MEGABYZUS, which he has so ranged in his splendid apartments, as to shew at once his taste and value for them. I am persuaded, that an affectation of this sort of science, as it is pretty general in Athens, instead of adding ornaments to society, must fill it with ridiculous characters. For if I understand thy ingenious comment upon those pieces of art, to judge of sculpture and painting, and be pleased with them on good grounds, a man should be acquainted with nature and the passions; should know how a base, an honest, or a great mind would actuate the body in different circumstances; in short, should be both an abstract moralist, and a practical observer of human life. I do not wonder, that thou, CLEANDER, shouldst add this to the number of thy accomplishments; but I think few have the previous qualifications for it.

In return for my entertainment, I will acquaint thee with some natural curiosities, which have lately engaged the attention of the Magi. One of them, PATIZITHES by name, has been at great pains in the collection, and has formed an extraordinary hypothesis thereon. He thinks, he is hereby enabled to prove not only the ancient deluge, but other revolutions in the earth

of a more permanent effect. This collection is lodged in a neat room, at one end of the schools of justice, where the sons of the Magi hold their daily disputes. Upon my entrance PATIZITHES opened the drawers of his cabinets, and exposed to view great number of sea-shells of such variety, as are scarce to be seen on the strand, when a furious tide has driven them from the bed of the ocean. My attention was raised by the sight, when PATIZITHES begun, saying, All nations have some tradition of a terrible flood, which deform'd the face of the earth, and brought such desolation upon our race, as to leave but a single family to re-people it. This was the great triumph of ARIMANIUS; he thought, when he was permitted to confound the elements, to mix air, earth, and water, and extinguish every spark of terrestrial fire; that he had renewed chaos and his ancient dominion over nature. But he soon saw order restored; and now no footsteps remain of that hideous devastation, but such as you see before you, a sufficient monument indeed of its truth to all future ages. These shells were gathered from different countries far from the sea; some of them formed parts of a rock; others were inclosed in a less dense coherent matter; some were near the summit of mountains; others many fathoms below the surface of the vales. The flat country of Babylonia and Ægypt, the rocks of Arabia and Persia, and that chain of hills, which runs from the Tanais towards the Caspian sea, contributed to enrich these cabinets. But, said I, there is room to doubt of their antiquity; for how could things of so perishable a nature be preserved through so many ages? Because, said PATIZITHES, they have been inclosed in the bowels of the earth, and were better guarded against the effects of time, than the bodies of the ancient Ægyptians in a case of asphaltus. Here, says he, observe that

shell, which so nearly resembles a cone; it was lately found on breaking a piece of marble, which made part of a great pyramid in the lake Moëris. Which therefore do you judge to be of greater antiquity, that ancient pyramid, or the shell you have in your hands? Doubtless, said I, you'll say the shell, because the materials must be older than the building. But, continued I, do you then suppose this shell to be coeval with the rocks? Not only so, says he, but prior to them, as I will satisfy you immediately. Upon which he broke the shell, and continued his lecture in the following manner. The contents, said he, you see are a piece of Ægyptian marble: now if you please to compare the marble with the shell its case, you find they exactly tally. No sculptor on earth could so nicely have fitted the protuberances of one to the cavities of the other. There is an exact similitude in the lines of each, though almost numberless, and some of them scarce discernible to the eye. This stone, therefore, which is now so firm and solid, was once not so, but in a fluid state, and received its impression from the shell. I am satisfied, said I, this cannot be the effect of art: but the notion of fluidity and the parts of a rock seem to be at a great distance; and I would rather continue in suspense, than sit down with such an hypothesis. There is greater difficulty in supposing this than the thing you would prove by it. I can more easily believe there has been a deluge, than that it should be able to soften rocks, and bring them to a state of dissolution; which is what you seem to aim at. Have patience, says he, and I will be more explicit on the subject. You know, that some of the ancient pillars and obelisks at Thebes, Memphis, and Babylon, are thought by the judicious to be nothing more than a cement or composition, because no quarry can be found that bears any

resemblance to them; and our modern builders have variety of such cements, as from a fluid state come to a firm consistency, when the superfluous moisture is carried off by the warm air and sun. Now why should we deny the same privilege to nature? When the mighty flood swept over the face of the earth, and ploughed up the loose soil, the mouldering clays, and chalks, and infinite variety of materials, the ancient rocks were washed at their very roots, their foundations were opened, and (as a rocky promontory undermined by the sea breaks off from the continent, and is sunk for ever in the abyss) having no steadfastness they reel'd from their places, and their weight bore them towards the centre, where they lie for ever beyond the reach of adventurous mortals. The blended materials thrown up in promiscuous heaps by the waves, covered them; and as the waters subsided, cemented together more closely; and as the parts were nearer akin, they cohered, and formed bodies of different firmness and solidity. I do not therefore require of you to believe, that the ancient rocks and compact bodies were dissolved, but that many new ones were formed by the deluge, which had inclosed the spoils of the sea within them. If you can admit this account, you will easily find a solution for every thing that lies before you; if not, they are attended with insuperable difficulties. What other rational account will you give of that shell of a nautilus, which was found buried in a stratum of a piceous substance below the bed of the river Arbis, when ARTAXERXES commanded a bridge to be built over it? Or those teeth and part of the jaw-bone of a monstrous shark, which were dug from the same quarry, that supplied the eunuch BAGORAZES in building his magnificent palace? This large drawer is filled with curiosities from a bed of chalk fifty cubits

below the surface of the earth. These small chalky masses are full of the little bones and teeth of fishes, and many shells of the most delicate texture, and great variety of shape and colour; for neither the form nor colour is injured by the softness of the stratum they fortunately fell into. I was much pleased with the sight of these, and begun to handle them too roughly, as I perceived by my friend's countenance, who turned as pale, as if I had defiled the elements. Upon which I restrained my curiosity within the bounds agreeable to him. He next bid me observe some stones, which retained impressions from fishes, which, says he, have long since been wasted away, because of their tender substance; but the impressions remain not only of the head, fins, and tail, but the very scales; and in some you may perceive a glossy gold colour received from the body of the fish. Here is one so entire, you may distinguish it to be a river perch.

Pray, said I, in this general confusion, which you suppose, might one not expect to find some products of the land as well as the sea preserved in the strata of the earth? Yes, replied he, there are some horns of deer, that were found in a morass at a very considerable depth. Here is a beak of the Ægyptian Ibis, and some teeth of monkeys, now no where but in Æthiopia, which were found in the heart of a mountain near the Araxes; and all those nuts and almonds, which you see, were dug from under the roots of ancient cedars in mount Libanus, when the Tyrians expected to find rich mines in its bowels. Those shattered and decayed bones were gathered from different depths of the earth, where it had never before been opened. Here, says he, are some masses of a very compact marble, but only used in covering

houses, because upon a stroke it is apt to shiver into thin plates; for many vegetables were buried in the stratum, and prevented its cementing so closely in those parts. Upon which he split it very dexterously, and now, says he, you may see the broad leaves of the Ægyptian papyrus lying flat, and parallel one to another, as you may have observed them after the Nile is abated, and has left those plants clogged with mud, and all inclining the same way with the direction of the stream. I could shew you many masses, that are filled with fern, the common produce of dry and barren grounds; some with myrtle, box, and many other vegetables. But pray take notice of two pieces of iron stone, each about a foot square, and of a flat surface: a sort of net work is deeply impress'd on the whole surface of one, on the other the same work is in a sort of relief; they differ no otherwise than the seal and the wax, for they once adhered together in the same mass. I took up a stone, which seem'd unworthy a place in his cabinets, and observ'd to him, that it was used in the most ordinary buildings. You are right, replied he, there is no commoner material; and the more I wonder it has not been taken notice of, for it is made up almost entirely of small shells. Place it in a convenient light, and you will see them of a thousand different shapes. The buildings of Susa, and, I doubt not, all the cities of the world are full of the exuviae of fishes. This is no extravagant thing to say, if we consider the vast shoals, that must have been poured out of the bosom of the deep, which not only contains the shells of the present race, but probably those of several preceding ages, since they seem not to be of a very perishable nature. I will add a piece of advice to thee, OTANES, who art employed by ARTAXERXES in raising monuments to his honour, that, when thou buildest for

posterity, thou chuse the most simple materials; for the veins and colouring of marbles are chiefly owing to vegetables and the exuviae of animals interspersed in the original strata, or some mixture of heterogeneous bodies, which seldom cement well together, and therefore yield sooner to the attacks of time. I thanked PATIZITHES for his advice, and the new scene he had opened to me. I told him, I was not one of those, who doubted the reality of a deluge; but I did not imagine nature would have supplied any arguments for it: she exhibits every where beauty and order, but is cautious of shewing her deformities. Thou, my friend, hast penetrated into her arcana, and bringest to light what she would have concealed. Thou discoverest how shamefully she was disturbed by the destroyer ARIMANIUS, who dissolved her laws, and set her at variance with herself.

H.

L E T T E R C.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

AS I am sensible my public dispatches are always read before the council of seven, and afterwards registered in the archives; I would not in them mention an affair, which gives me some uneasiness, and which I intend only for thy knowledge. My brother HIPPIAS enclosed in his last packet the following sentence out of a letter from HYDASPES the chamberlain to him. "Tell CLEANDER, his merit has raised him many enemies, who endeavour to supplant him in the favour of the ministers. The practices of the great are busy against him. I have not at present time to write more." My friends have sent me no advices of this nature; and yet the mysterious brevity of this paragraph strangely confounds me. I know not any of the courtiers, to whom I ever gave the least ground of offence; at the same time I cannot understand the conduct of TERIBAZUS the treasurer. He has never once wrote to me since I resided at Athens, though he made me large promises of friendship before I left Ecbatana; and for this last year I have never received a single mina of my appointments. If the former liberalities of MEGABYZUS and thy self had not supported me, I should have been reduced to great distress.

Next to the protection of OROMASDES, generous GOBRYAS, I depend upon thine. Thou wert never yet

known to disappoint the meanest of thy dependants. I will therefore rest assured, that thou wilt not suffer a friend to be run down by court-faction, who may venture to say, that he has not been useless to the country which employed him. Adieu.

From Athens.

P.

L E T T E R C I.

ORSAMES TO CLEANDER.

I have in a former letter observed to thee, CLEANDER, that the peculiar regard, which the Ægyptians shew to the remains of their deceased friends, proceeded upon a persuasion of the soul's subsisting after its separation from the body; an opinion, which has so generally obtained in all nations of the world, that one may with better reason conclude it is inherent in the human soul from a consciousness of its own immortality, than that it was discovered first by the Ægyptians, and derived by them to the rest of mankind. But however that be, they doubtless were the first, who accommodated this doctrine to the gross conceptions of the vulgar; and this gave rise to the superstitious representations in their funeral solemnities, which are performed near Memphis in a large parcel of ground set apart for that purpose, and called the territory of the dead. * It consists of several large and pleasant meadows, encompassed with groves of

* Diod. SICUL. L. I. c. 7.

lotus and sweet canes, and watered with many clear rivulets and fountains from the serpentine windings of the Nile. But the dead are not admitted, nor supposed to be admitted to this place, until they have passed the solemn tribunal, to which they are conveyed in a boat across a great lake called Acherusia. Before the coffin is put aboard, any person is at liberty by the law to accuse the dead; and if it can be proved, that the deceased led a wicked life, then the judges appointed for that purpose give sentence, and the body is refused an honourable burial. If no informer appears, or the information is proved false, all the kindred of the deceased leave off mourning, and begin to set forth his praises, and recount the virtues, wherein he excelled, invoking the infernal deities to receive him into the society of the just. On one side of the lake is the temple of the infernal HECATE, and the gates of COCYTUS and LETHE made fast with brazen bars; on the other the pleasant islands and meadows before mentioned, where those, who are absolved at this tribunal, have a right to be interred, if their friends desire it; but whether their bodies are deposited there or not, they represent the calm, or happy state, into which such persons are received in the Amnethes or invisible region of departed souls. I have already hinted to you, that their doctrine of the soul's immortality is blended with that of its successive revolution through different bodies. * The Amnethes therefore, or their name for the invisible region, signifies a place, that receives the souls, and sends them back again. In that state the good after their removal from the body are supposed to be in a quiet and unruffled situation.

* Τὸν ὑποχθόνιον τόπον εἰς ὃν οἰοῦνται τὰς ψυχὰς ἀπέρχεσθαι μετὰ τὴν τελευτὴν Ἀμένθην καλοῦσι σημαίνοντες τῇ ὀνόματι τὸν λαμβάνοντα καὶ δίδόντα. PLUT. de Isid. p. 362.

* But it is not till after they have passed through their several successive revolutions, and have returned again into the human body, and not till after a second separation from it, that they are supposed to pass into an happy state, if they have acted their part virtuously in this the second time as they did before. But the notion of the soul's transmigrating through various kinds of bodies, I have reason to think, was a later improvement of their philosophy; and I conceive the more ancient doctrine to have been rather this, viz. that they should return again to act their part in an human body at the great mundane revolution. When in our way to the Labyrinth we stopped to survey the three great pyramids, that stand between Memphis and Arsinoe, it was impossible not to reflect, upon what principle they could be erected. They might perhaps be contrived for other purposes of their religion besides the intombing of the dead: but however that be, 'tis certain the founders of them intended their remains should be deposited therein. A desire indeed of perpetuating their names by some lasting monuments might be natural to the Ægyptian kings, as well as those of other nations; yet 'tis peculiar to Ægypt to boast of a more expensive magnificence in these monuments than in the palaces of the living. And by designing to be buried within the pyramids, places of such impenetrable strength as were never erected for the defence of the living, one must suppose, they intended to secure their remains against the injuries of time, or hostile fury in those eternal habitations. And does not this peculiarity appear of a piece with that of their being more solicitous than any other people, to preserve their bodies

* Εἰς δὲ τὸ το φαῦλος μὲν ἔδειξ ἑδὲ ἀκάθαρτος ἀνεισιν· οἱ δὲ χοροὶ μετὰ τὴν τελευτὴν κομισθέντες, αὐτοὶ ῥᾶρον μὲν ἔτι βίον, ὃ μὲν μακάριον ἑδὲ θεῖον ἔχουσιν, ἄχρι τῆ δευτέρου θανάτου διατελῶσι. PLUT. de facie in lunâ, p. 942.

from putrefaction by salting and embalming them, which is an art original to Ægypt? Both the one and the other peculiarity may, I believe, be accounted for upon the same principle, which CHERES an Ægyptian priest suggested to us in some discourse we had upon this subject. It was the ancient opinion, that the souls delighted to hover about those places, where the bodies were deposited, * with good hopes of returning again into their own, if those bodies could be preserved until the great period came round. But in case they mouldered away, or were destroyed by violence, their soul would be allotted to some new body, and in that again exposed to all the same hazards of vice and pollution it had happily escaped in the first. † The Ægyptians in their symbolical way express the permanent and incorruptable nature of the soul by certain immutable proportions of number; from whence PYTHAGORAS, they say, learnt to call it a self-moving number, expressing in a mystical sense mind, or an essence, that had nothing in it of matter, which is flux and changeable. Some believe the pyramidal form to be expressive of certain sacred and mystical doctrines; but I think it more natural to suppose, that in those monuments, which were intended to endure through a long course of ages, it was pitched upon principally, as being a form the most permanent and lasting. It might moreover be designed in honour to the chief objects of their worship; for pyramids and obelisks have been very ancient representations of the celestial divinities, by allusion to the pyramidal or conical forms,

* Ægyptii periti sapientiæ condita diutius reservant cadavera, scilicet, ut anima multo tempore perduret, & corpori sit obnoxia, ne cito ad aliud transeat. SERVII Comment. in v. 67. Æneid. L. III.

† ——— Τὸν δ' ἀριθμὸν ἑαυτὸν κινῶντα, τὸν δ' ἀριθμὸν ἀντὶ τοῦ νῦν παραλαμβάνει. PLUT. de placit. L. IV. c. 2.

in which the rays are emitted from a luminous body.
 * The pyramids I saw stand upon the brow of a rocky hill, which rises in a gentle ascent from the level plains by Memphis, but the same rock is continued westward to the steep mountains of Lybia. Each side of the greatest pyramid contains about seven hundred Grecian feet in length; the sides ascend by rows rising like stairs from the bottom to the top. The height is computed to be pretty near equal to the base. † The river enters by a secret channel into a great subterraneous vault underneath this pyramid; and in the middle of that receptacle is an insular fabric, where the king's body, who finished the pyramid, was intended to be intombed. A great causeway, paved in some places with granate marble, lies from the banks of the Nile to the brow of the hill, whereon this pyramid stands. Southward about a bow-shot from this, we meet with another, the next in magnitude, but which falls short of the dimensions of the first; neither are the stones, which compose it, of so vast a size. The sides rise not by degrees like that, but are a smooth sliding plain from the bottom to the top. ‡ It is bounded by the North and West with a row of cells, the whole like a regular fabric, hewn out in the hard rock. || On the West side likewise of the great pyramid is a large pile of building of the Bifaltes stone; from whence as from the cells round the second are secret passages into both, but through them only the priests or the initiated ever enter. South East is the famous Sphinx, an immense Colossus, computed to be in length one hundred and forty three feet, in height sixty two, and one hundred and two in compass about the head. It was

* GREAVES's Pyramidographia.

† HEROD. Euterp.

‡ GREAVES, ubi supra.

|| Id. ibid.

undoubtedly erected there to express the season of the inundation. The third pyramid stands distant from the second about a furlong, upon an advantageous height, whereby afar off it appears equal to the former, though indeed the whole pile is much less and lower; yet for the structure and beauty of the marble excels both that and the great one. Close adjoining to it on the East side is another building of a dark stone like Thebaic marble. At a distance we could discern to the South several other pyramids, which lie scattered through a desert tract on the confines of Lybia, and are found all along the upper region to the borders of Æthiopia; many of which I saw in my passage the last year down the Nile; but most of them, though very durable in their kind, were the work of earlier and more simple ages, when the Ægyptians were rather desirous to preserve their remains inviolable, than ambitious to leave conspicuous monuments of their state and magnificence. They were erected by the ancient kings of the Thinite dynasty, or in their times. However there is, I am told, one among them, which nearly equals in its dimensions the largest of these by Memphis. Next in antiquity to those, and more ancient than these, are two admirable pyramids standing in the middle of the great lake of Mœris. For CHEMMIS (whom HERODOTUS uses to call CHEOPS, making a Greek name of the Ægyptian) who is reputed the founder of the first of these by Memphis, was among the descendants or successors of SESOSTRIS; and SESOSTRIS himself was later than Mœris. CEPHREN and MYCERINUS, to whom the second and third are ascribed, were one the brother, the other a son of CHEMMIS. The great lake of Mœris was contrived for a balance to the waters in the annual inundation. And there is a communication from the river to the lake by a great ditch eighty furlongs in length, and three hundred feet in breadth, by which it may receive

the superfluity of water, when the Nile rises to an excessive height, as by opening its other sluices the country a great distance round it may be supplied in seasons, when the river fails. And though the expence of opening and shutting the sluices be very great, yet it is certainly a work of the greatest benefit to Ægypt. In the midst of the lake the king contrived a place for his sepulchre, and raised two stately pyramids, the one for himself, the other for his wife; and upon the summit of each he placed a colossus of marble sitting upon a throne. From the foundation the pyramids, are a hundred fathoms high; they are seen fifty fathoms above the water, and are hid as many fathoms under it; so that the lake is in some places three hundred feet in depth, and, as HERODOTUS persuades me, was all made by art. The circumference is computed at three thousand six hundred furlongs. It lies about six hundred furlongs above the city of Memphis. We passed in a boat across this lake to the Labyrinth, which is said to have been built by joint consent of the twelve kings, who reigned in Ægypt after the expulsion of SETHON the priest of VULCAN. The fabric is the most wonderful in its kind in all the world, from which DÆDALUS received the model of the much famed labyrinth he built in Crete. The subterraneous apartments were all cut by hand in the solid rock; which might pass for an incredible story, were it not considered, that the whole rock is a sand stone, which contributes to the preservation of the bodies deposited within it. And in these wonderful apartments are the * *gabbaras* or mummies of the twelve kings who built the labyrinth with the remains of crocodiles, and other their sacred animals. But if the labour and expence of sinking pits, and

* So the embalmed bodies were called in the language of the country, as St. AUGUSTIN confirms: "Morem enim habent siccare corpora, & quasi ænea reddere; Gabbaras ea vocant." AUG. ferm. 120. de diversis. Note by the translator.

excavating vaults in the solid rock, or raising such immense piles of stone above ground to secure the human remains from the violence of after ages, may be in some sort accounted for upon a persuasion they firmly maintain with regard to the soul's revolution; yet their paying an equal regard to the remains of the most noxious animals can be resolved into nothing but the most extravagant phrensy and superstition. The whole nome, which takes its name from the neighbouring town of Arfinoe, pays an extravagant veneration to crocodiles. These are embalmed with most exquisite art, and set up in niches, as the bodies of birds and other animals are through every part of the subterraneous chambers. At the angle where the labyrinth ends, there is a pyramid of two hundred and forty feet in height, with a basis of the same dimensions, on which are engraved Colossean figures of animals: the passage that leads to it is under ground. The several corridors and intricate passages of the labyrinth below seem to answer, as near as we could compare them together, to the apartments above; of which as I know HERODOTUS has given the exactest description possible, I will not be tedious in endeavouring it after him. It was by a very particular interest with CHERES the Ægyptian priest, who accompanied us in this tour, that I gained admittance into the apartments under ground, which HERODOTUS himself was denied seeing the first time that he travelled into Ægypt. But I must have been initiated to have entered the pyramids; the preparations for which I have no time now to go through.

I write this from Sais, a city of ancient note in the Delta, the curiosities of which, after I have taken a regular survey of them, may furnish out another letter to you, before I begin my voyage for Greece. But I willingly confess, CLEANDER, that you are so well instructed in the philo-

sophy and learning of those sages, who were most conversant in the recondite doctrines of Ægypt, that I have corresponded with you more for my own sake, than for any information I could hope to give you from the little I have gained by my inquiries. HERODOTUS said upon seeing your epistle on the Eleusinian mysteries, "This Ephesian has discovered more of those secrets by a shrewd induction from some slight and unguarded hints of his Athenian friends, than any ought to know, who is not an initiate, or than an initiate should dare to reveal;" and he hath religiously omitted the very mention of them in his history. Adieu.

From Sais.

L.

The end of the fifth year of the Peloponnesian war.

*A. M. 3578. 3d. year of the 88th Olymp.
The sixth year of the Peloponnesian war.*

L E T T E R CIL

HYDASPES TO CLEANDER.

ALAS! CLEANDER, the throne of CYRUS has lost its firmest support, and our monarch the ablest of his ministers, in the person of MEGABYZUS. This great man expired, full of years and honours, at his palace in Susa, the 15th of this moon, with a circumstance attending his death, which rarely befalls those in his station, that both the tears of the prince, and the lamentations of the people attended him to the grave. And indeed their sorrows were with good reason united; for the hereditary estates and dignities, which descended to him from his grandfather MEGABYZUS, who assisted to destroy the Magian tyranny, and his father ZOPYRUS, who took Babylon, threw him under no temptations of complying servilely with the measures of a court, to raise a fortune, or giving up the interest of the crown, from which he derived his honours, through an affectation

of popularity. At the same time the virtue and generosity of his temper rendered him incapable of suggesting any counsels but such as tended to the mutual benefit of the monarch and the subject. His many shining qualities, and glorious exploits, are at present the reigning topic of our conversation. And though the remembrance of them rather serves to imbitter than allay our concern, permit me, in compliance with the general task, to indulge myself a little on a subject, to which thou thyself mayst be in part a stranger, since thy acquaintance at court was not formed, till the most active scenes of his life were over.

MEGABYZUS was educated under the eyes of his father in the regular and manly discipline of the ancient Persians, of all others the best adapted to rectify the heart. Hence he imbibed those principles of justice and fortitude, which carried him through the world with untainted integrity. He was early inured to the dangers of war, according to the custom of the young Persian satraps; and performed such services in his first campaigns, as recommended him to the notice of DARIUS, a prince remarkable for a superior skill in distinguishing the merit of his subjects. In the next reign, MEGABYZUS's favour was so far from being diminished, that, when XERXES undertook his expedition against Greece, he made him general of the land forces in conjunction with MARDONIUS; and, as a farther mark of distinction, allied him to the royal blood by a marriage with AMYTIS his daughter. As thou knowest, that the ill success of the invasion of Greece was owing to the rash counsels which conducted it, there is reason to believe, that MEGABYZUS took no greater share in the management of the war, than the duties of his office required from him; and even declined being concerned in a project, on which XERXES would have sent him, of plundering Delphi. It was in the happy

reign of our present monarch, that the merits of this great man principally displayed themselves; for the wisdom of the prince never fails to shed a cherishing influence over the abilities of his servants. The first service, which MEGABYZUS performed, was no less than that of discovering and preventing the treasons of ARTABANUS, who, after taking away the life of XERXES, imputed the murder to his eldest son DARIUS; and when this detested calumny had brought undeserved punishment on the young prince, he continued his practices against ARTAXERXES, the next heir. MEGABYZUS, not content with distinguishing his fidelity by tracing out this dangerous conspiracy, gave strong proofs of his courage, in a battle against the adherents of ARTABANUS, who raised a rebellion to revenge his death. He was afterwards thought the fittest person to command in Ægypt, where the natives had taken the advantage of these troubles to throw off their obedience to Persia, and were strongly supported by the Athenians. MEGABYZUS defeated the rebels and their allies in a battle near Memphis, and soon reduced them to surrender, upon this single condition, that their lives should be spared.

Thou wilt wonder, that I pass over in silence a few succeeding years of this great man's life; let it suffice to say, that by a steady observance of duty through the remaining part of it, he expiated the short folly he had been guilty of in departing from that strict submission to his prince, which is required by the laws of Persia. Those, who were acquainted with his high spirit, and high notions of honour, were perhaps less surprized than others at his indignation, to see his successful services so ill requited, as that the Ægyptian prisoners, and INARIUS their pretended king, should be put to death, contrary to the public faith, which he had engaged to them for their safety. On his return

to court, our monarch, who perhaps thought him not sufficiently humbled, or had a mind to put his fidelity to a trial, took hold of an occasion to banish him to Cirta, on pretence, that he had violated a standing law of the empire, which enjoins, that none should dare at any hunting to strike the beast, before the King had thrown his javelin. MEGABYZUS behaved himself with such resignation in his exile, that, by the intercession of his friends, he was restored to the royal favour, and employed to oppose the attempts of CIMON. The constant run of ill success, which attended us in every engagement with the Greeks, had so dispirited our soldiers, that all the conduct of MEGABYZUS could not inspire them with courage, in a battle, which he ventured against the Athenian general on the coasts of Cilicia. This induced him to be a strenuous adviser of peace, that the empire might have leisure and opportunity to recover its losses. The conditions of the treaty, which goes by the name of CIMON's peace, were, as thou knowest, rather suited to the exigency of our affairs, than the honour or advantage of the empire, and occasioned at first great discontents among the people. But MEGABYZUS both foresaw and foretold the advantages, which must ensue to us, when the Greeks, delivered from foreign wars, would in all probability turn their arms against themselves. This always made him attentive to the progress of those disturbances, which the restless ambition of the states, where thou residest, perpetually excites. He employed ARTHMIUS of Zelis to foment the quarrels between Athens and Sparta; and when the war now carrying on was ready to break out, proposed in council, that thou shouldst be sent to watch over the counsels of Greece. Thou gavest him so much satisfaction in this employment, that on his death-bed he spoke of thy abilities in the strongest

as well as the kindest terms to the king himself, who did him the honour of a visit.

And in truth, my **CLEANDER**, thou hast occasion for the patronage of all thy friends. **TERIBAZUS** the treasurer, whose crafty insinuating temper thou art not unacquainted with, privately impels that positive old counsellor, the master of the post, to spread about disadvantageous reports of thy conduct. They give out, that thou hast indeed transmitted the news of the **Piræus** with tolerable exactness; but neither raised up friends to Persia, or penetrated into the secrets of the Athenian counsels. That, instead of joining with **CLEON** and his faction, whom it is our interest to support, as they desire the continuance of the war, thou conversest with none but those, who declare for peace, and even minglest in their cabals. **PETISAS**, the eunuch, and **ARTASYRAS**, keeper of the records, do thee ill offices. The chief aim of this foolish intrigue, which I have taken some pains to get to the bottom of is to contrive thy removal from Athens, that one **TIMOCLES** may be thy successor. He is a rhetorician of Eubœa, who having fled his country for debt, has rambled over most part of Greece, and procured recommendations to some of the satraps here. He appears, from the little I have seen of him, to be a talkative conceited pedant, pretending to great correspondencies in Greece, and to be well skilled, not only in the politer arts, which have been his study, but in the politics of each republic, and the dispositions of the ruling men. He is a constant attendant at the tables of several of our satraps, to whom he pays an assiduous court, by flattering every splendid vanity, and complying with each fantastic humour of his patrons; the never-failing arts, by which a parasite and sycophant finds means to shut the doors of the great against modest worth. I

can assure thee, that the calumnies of thy enemies make no impression upon the mind of our sovereign. He has supported the remonstrances of GOBRYAS by such express orders to the treasurer concerning thy remittances, as he will not dare to disobey. That honest minister is employed in the friendly but disagreeable office of settling the affairs of MEGABYZUS's family, which are much disordered by the infamous practices of APOLLONIDES the physician. I know not how to explain to thee, at this distance, such a complication of guilt. That Coan wretch has dared to pollute the honour of the royal blood, and stain the bed of his master and benefactor with adultery. But let me draw a veil over this scene of iniquity, and only wish, that the name of AMYTIS may not descend to posterity in the annals of the family of ACHÆMENES. The bare touching this subject renews my grief of the loss for so able a minister, which those alone are capable of feeling as they ought, whom history and experience teaches, how much the influence of one superior genius contributes to the happiness of nations *. Farewel.

From Susa.

P.

* It is not improper to observe here once for all, that the principal facts in these letters, relating to MEGABYZUS and his family, are likewise mentioned, though with less accuracy and fewer circumstances, in the fragments of CTESIAS, which are usually printed at the end of HERODOTUS. The confirmation, which those fragments receive from our collection, will probably give the reader a better opinion of the CNIDIAN physician's veracity, whose fabulous accounts of India have greatly sunk the credit of his Persian history; though one would imagine, that his long residence in the court of ARTAXERXES MNEMON, and his personal favour with that prince, must have enabled him to compile it from the most authentic materials. Note by the Translator.

L E T T E R CIII.

CLEANDER TO ORSAMES.

I have taken all opportunities of improving my acquaintance with SOCRATES. The several conversations I have had with him, on the subject of religion, give me no reason to repent of it. And this thou wilt perhaps think strange, when I ingenuously confess to thee, that he has unsettled the favourable sentiments, I entertained before, of every known mode of popular worship established on the earth; such is either the dexterity or the force of his reasonings. We walked out together the other day in a very speculative mood, at some distance from the city, towards the shore, where we surveyed the ravages, which the sea has lately made on the opposite coast of Eubœa. It was a melancholy prospect to observe trees torn up by the roots; the hopes of the husbandman floating on the surface of the waters; and as the scene made a strong impression on my fancy, so it called up my compassion. I could not help crying out in a fit of very humane enthusiasm; "Good providence! why dost thou suffer the evil principle to deform and desolate thy works! How will it glad the universe to see the day, when the power indulged to this being shall submit to thine!"

SOCRATES interrupted me, while I was running on in my complaints; "And pray, said he, CLEANDER, do

you know the intention of the Creator, in producing that infinite variety of weeds and insects, which follow one another in numberless successions every hour, and which suffer as much from the tread of the thinking philosopher, as of the heedless peasant? These always seem superfluous, and are often inconvenient to us; and yet doubtless have their use and importance in the system. Are you acquainted, continued he, with the design of the shipwright in each rope, sail, or timber, that contributes to the building of a galley? And yet you can trust to his discretion and experience in such matters. Perhaps the tone of every string, upon the Doric harp, may, when separately taken, be jarring and unpleasant; and yet their sounds are so exactly proportioned to each other, as to compose the most striking and engaging melody. Will you then place less confidence in the mechanism of the divine artist than in that of a shipwright? Or, because you know more of the harmony of an harp, than of the universe, will you doubt the skill of him, who formed the music of the spheres, and preserves the minutest atom, that lies under our feet, or the largest orb, that rolls over our heads, in its proper situation?" "The submission you recommend, returned I, is a good maxim." "If then, answered he, you are by no means master of the volume of nature; why should you pretend to criticise it? If you are persuaded of the deity's existence and omnipotence; of the boundless wisdom, benevolence, and rectitude of his nature; satisfy your doubts with the rational as well as pious solution, that, whatever happens either in the natural or moral world, with respect to its ultimate tendency and the good of all, operates as it ought to do. And that oriental doctrine of the future resignation of power to be made by ARIMANIUS to OROMASDES, is neither more nor less, than a figurative or allegorical manner of expressing this plain truth. Who

knows but the guardian genius of our state may have turned the inundation, resulting necessarily from those general laws, by which matter is directed, on the coast of Eubœa, where its consequences are less fatal, than they would have been on that of Athens? Perhaps therefore we have reason to be particularly thankful. Let that be as it will; it is agreed that storms and tempests are of service in clearing the atmosphere from vapours: and why may not earthquakes and torrents, however they injure and distress us for a while, answer some unknown purposes of lasting benefit? Of these things we are both incompetent and improper judges."

"I see, interrupted I, what you aim at: you would argue, that all evil is partial, and not absolute; that what we see of it arises not from any malevolent being counteracting the good one, but from the original scheme and constitution of things. At the same time you must own, that uninterrupted tradition, one of the most universal and acknowledged arguments for the belief of a providence, speaks as strongly in support of the opinion, which you controvert. This opinion has been long held by the Persians, and many other nations of the world. For they thought, (and rightly I believe) that evil in no shape whatever could be derived from God: they thought, that as he is perfectly good, he could never intermix the least share of it in his works; and as he is perfectly wise, they imagined, if the whole depended on his will, he would have been careful to contrive it better." "From such narrow and contracted views of the system, replied SOCRATES, men have conceived it necessary to suppose an ARIMANIUS, in order to clear difficulties; little apprehending, that all evil, like the viper, carries along with it an antidote for the poison it sheds. We find vice or moral evil is attended with pain or natural evil: by this

means men are brought to a sense of what is right, and natural evil in it's turn produces moral good. By another revolution very obvious and frequent, moral good brings forth natural good; and that producing riot and excess, again brings forth moral evil. Such is the revolving condition of things; nor is any part of the creation calculated to unhappy ends, in the whole golden chain of causes and effects, which hangs down from heaven to earth, and is fixed to the foot of Jove's throne. You see there is no occasion for the bad principle to account for appearances in morals, or in physics. It is then highly reasonable to believe there is none." "But, said I, to wave the supposition of a malevolent being existing from all eternity; methinks another opinion is not absurd, which is derived from ancient tradition, that before the formation of the world out of Chaos, a certain spirit of high order revolted from his allegiance to the Deity, and drew off with him a large number of demons. These perpetually endeavour to disturb the regularity of the universe, and are more especially employed in haunting the ways of men, and suggesting to us those iniquities, which may reduce us to the same state of misery with themselves."

"Even this sentiment, answered SOCRATES, appears to me liable to such difficulties, as sufficiently explode it; although it is secure from the great variety of contradictions, on which the other is founded. It is improbable, that a being so excellent in rational endowments, and therefore sensible of his own finiteness, should entertain a thought of rebelling against the infinite providence. We find even men, frail and short-sighted as they are, exposed to innumerable unruly appetites, and ever complying with their impulse, are, when they commit vice, far from meaning to affront the Deity, and

only design to gratify a craving and tormenting passion. Such beings, as the revolted ones you speak of, could not then be so absurd, as to attempt dethroning that power, who raised them from nothing, and by whose goodness they subsisted; and as they were of so sublime a nature, they could be open to no passion, but the more refined one of ambition or of pride. From the faint attacks of both these the purity of their judgments would preserve them: in the former case, a just sense of the divine perfections; in the latter, of their own. Else, I would ask, of what value is exalted reason? But granting there is this commonwealth of evil spirits existing in the vast expanse; yet I doubt, whether they are suffered to break in upon the borders of our world. To speak plainly, I must think their agency here not only neither terrible nor troublesome, but entirely unnecessary. Our virtue is sufficiently assaulted by internal passions or external allurements; and reason often quits the field, unequal to the combat. It is to be presumed therefore, if these spirits are permitted to ensnare mankind, that the good Being gives us in those moments an extraordinary power to assist our reason, in withstanding the extraordinary temptations, which engage our appetites. So that, admitting the fact to be as you state it, we are just in the condition, in which we were before, as to the proportion of *temptation* to invite transgression, and of *reason* to support virtue. Hence I maintain, that the agency of these beings is unnecessary; and as the wisest of all Beings can do nothing, that is superfluous, I must think the opinion is an error, however supported by tradition, or enforced by authority. The truth is, the belief of the evil principle (as I have already explained to you) arose from the conjectures of Ignorance; and the worship of him arose from the suggestions of Fear; the two fatal ingredients of Superstition, which begins

in the first, and terminates in the last. For the understanding and the passions reciprocally misrepresent objects, and serve to confirm one another in their mutual mistakes. I hardly imagine this idolatry took place soon after the creation of things, or early in a state of innocence and nature. The human race would be pleased in the beginning with the freshness and novelty of all around them. They would address themselves to the good principle in songs of thanksgiving; and as, during their artlessness and simplicity, scarce any natural evils, and no moral evils appeared, they would not turn their thoughts or adoration to the bad principle. And indeed it is rational to suppose, that it would be in the infancy of an undepraved world, as in the infancy of man. We should be more governed by hope, a passion, that attends the harmless and unpractised, than by fear, a passion, that grows only from disappointments and experience. Afterwards when regular societies were, by degrees, scattered over the face of the earth, natural evil increasing with the improvements of art and the fantastic elegancies of life, and moral evil springing up from the refinements of policy, and jarring interests of private persons and of nations, mankind became dissatisfied with the dispensations of providence, not apprehending they had brought these calamities on themselves; endeavoured to search for the cause of them; and at last dressed up in their affrighted imaginations that airy vision of the malicious being. Thus stands the origin of the opinion, whose progress I take to have been this.

When the difficulty of accounting for the phenomenon of evil was first started in the minds of men, they thought their God was enraged with them, believing he had the seeds of peevishness within him as well as they; and in order to mollify him, they worshipped him under

the particular consideration of his angry actions. This was done in many countries by the worship of evil characters recorded in their histories, which were thought to be emblematical of the wrathful agency of the Deity. In Tyre, and in Carthage, (a Tyrian colony,) they still continue to offer human sacrifices to SATURN or MOLOCH, who probably was once a cruel tyrant in that kingdom, and adored upon his death, to prevent him from persevering, in another life, in the malevolent dispositions he had shewn to his people in this. The worship of SATURN was afterwards interpreted to bear a general allusion to the disorder observed in the system, and regarded only as a peculiar manner of appeasing the anger of the one Deity. The case was the same in Ægypt as to the worship of TYPHON, who, in his historical capacity, was the disturber of his country, as OSIRIS was the benefactor of it; in his allegorical, he was the burning heat of the sun producing drought in their lands, and the anger of the Deity exerting itself in the punishment of the world. But when men saw an uninterrupted train of evils come in upon them, instead of here and there an inconvenience or a mischief, as at first, they thought these different operations could not be derived from one cause; and to remedy the seeming inconsistency, they imputed the good effects to one being, and the evil to another. Hence they implored the assistance of the one, and deprecated the resentment of the other; never reflecting, that however they might hope to soften a being various in his temper, it was absurd to intreat or expect compassion from one perfectly malicious. "I am very much obliged to you, SOCRATES, said I, for your unreserved disquisition of this matter; and since we have entered so fairly and insensibly into the subject of idolatry, I wish you would go on with it." "We are now, answered the philosopher, returned to the city, and

my engagements call me to a symposium with ALCEBIADES. But I flatter myself another opportunity will soon be offered to us." And so we parted.

Whether there was any weight in these reasonings, thy penetration will inform thee. Thou wilt at least judge from hence, how freely SOCRATES discourses on every point of moral instruction and popular belief. For my own part, I was silenced, not convinced by his arguments; or, if I were convinced, I was unwilling to be converted by them.

The detection of error, ORSAMES, as is necessary to the confirmation of truth, as the contemplation of vice to the practice of virtue. And yet I question, whether it be worth while to think for ourselves upon these matters, to reform speculative errors, and depart from received opinions. Such enquiries expose a man to various censures. The discreet upbraid him with imprudence, the prejudiced with absurdity, the dull with affectation, and the bigots with impiety. In Greece indeed there is one circumstance attending these studies, which prevents the ill consequences, that might otherwise arise from them. For the philosophers, not esteeming the people fit to be admitted into their Arcana, lay it down, that truth is intended for private entertainment, rather than for public utility; as if it were like the water of the Choaspes, whose refreshing draughts are indulged to none, but the sovereigns of Asia,

C.

L E T T E R C I V .

CLEANDER to SMERDIS the Mage.

WONDER not, wise SMERDIS, that I frequently send thee my observations on human nature, and its efforts towards wisdom in this country. Assure thyself, no place in the world affords such variety as Greece. Thou, who art used to converse with a people contented with the wisdom of ZOROASTER, livest in perpetual calm. Thou canst have no conception of the turns and whimsical sallies of the human mind, where full liberty is indulged. The peace, which arises from an union of opinion, is like a dead still sea; without danger indeed, but it shows not the strength and nature of that element. In this place, if a man preserve but an external regard for the Gods, the principles of philosophy and religion are mere matters of choice. He may take what master he pleases; or, if he like it better, (which some have affected) he may take none, and so have the credit of being self-taught, and perhaps too of being the only follower, as well as founder of his system.

There is a man of no small note at Abdera, who to a knowledge of nature has joined that of mankind. By a constant train of reasoning founded on experiment, he attained the one; and the change of manners, that

a course of travels presented him, gave him a sufficient insight into the other. The result of this improved genius is something extraordinary; he very much affects solitude, but with no design towards serious speculations; nothing is farther from him: he shuns men, not to avoid the gaiety of conversation, and the impertinence of mirth, but because he can enjoy himself better, and be merrier without them. Nobody laughs more heartily at a jest he has just heard, than this philosopher does at his own ordinary reflections. His imagination affords him a constant supply of ridiculous images; but if any of his neighbours interrupt his merriment by falling in his way, he turns the laugh upon them. It is to no purpose to tell him, they are disposed to be serious; that they expect his condolence for the loss of their treasure, the failure of a vintage, or the death of a relation. He knows no passion but one; and whatever turn of mind their fortune gives them, his is always to be merry. In short, if he hears that an heir is born, or a family is extinct; if he be told of new honours conferred, or disgrace falling upon a great man; of the success of an army, or its defeat; his laughter is equally immoderate. This philosophic turn has something so particular in it, that the whole town agreed to send for HIPPOCRATES to cure him of his frenzy. The physician, upon his arrival, found him in the laborious employment of dissecting animals, and was received with a loud laugh; which however was so far from convincing him of his patient's disorder, that, after some conversation with him, he turned back with indignation, and said, he was the only man amongst them in his sound senses.

Thou, my venerable friend, whose composed mind is as the serene brightness of the moon, wilt almost

fancy this extravagant character is of my own forming. But I assure thee, I have heard also of another master in philosophy of a direct opposite turn, who weeps at every thing, which raises the mirth of the odd citizen of Abdera. I cannot tell, which of these two to prefer; and it is impossible to approve both. But I think, if that learned physician had confined them together, till they had reconciled their systems to each other, he would have taken a reasonable method of bringing them to that moderation, which thou art too well acquainted with, either to let the vice and misery of our species subject thy mind to perpetual melancholy or the vanities and follies of it be the materials for thy sport and merriment. Farewel.

H.

L E T T E R CV.

ARTAXERXES the KING to CLEANDER.

THE satisfaction, which you have given us by your diligence and abilities in the discharge of your employment at Athens, hath been so great, that we have not only ordered our ministers to signify it to you in their dispatches, but bestowed several marks of our royal favour upon you, as a just reward of your faithful services.

We do not doubt of the continuance of that zeal and industry, which hath hitherto appeared in your conduct; and have therefore thought fit to entrust you with an affair of the highest importance, which demands as much secrecy in the management, as speed in the execution. You cannot be ignorant, that during the time of our royal father, the people of Bœotia, particularly the Thebans, were well affected to the Persian cause, and even, in opposition to the rest of Greece, made the submission of earth and water, which was demanded of them; persevering in their fidelity to us inviolably, till the unfortunate battle of Platæa. We have lately received undoubted intelligence, that notwithstanding the change, which happened at Thebes, soon after that action, and the general notion, that the city is entirely devoted to the interest of Lacedæmon, there still subsist great remains of the old Median faction, who want nothing but encouragement from us, and supplies of money, to take the government into their hands. Upon these grounds we direct you, that without the least delay or staying for further

orders, you set out for Thebes ; and if you find things in the condition, which we have reason to believe they are in, you must concert, with the descendants of TIMAGINES and ARTAGINUS, (families well known for their adherence to our interest) those alterations in the senate and magistracy, which may bring that state back to its former measures. It will then be easy for you to prevail, that we may be admitted into the Peloponnesian league, or at least the Bœotian confederacy ; and that a proper place of arms, as the fortrefs of Elatea, may be provided for the reception of the troops we shall send to their assistance. We have ordered our treasurer TERIBAZUS to send you by the ship, which conveys this packet, remittances sufficient to enable you to put our design in execution ; and so not doubting, that you will exert your utmost abilities to accomplish this important service, we recommend you to the protection of OROMASDES.

Given at Susa the palace, the 22d of the moon Aban in the 41st year of our reign.

P.

L E T T E R C V I .

CLEANDER to ORSAMES.

I met SOCRATES very lately returning from a sacrifice, at which he had been present with many others in the temple of Minerva. "I esteem myself extremely fortunate, said I, in meeting you at a season so opportune for religious speculations. You know the claim which I have upon you; and though various things have passed since our last conference, in the daily course of business and conversation, in which we are engaged; yet I assure you, my thoughts have often recurred to the matters you insisted on." After some recollection the philosopher began thus: "That the best things are liable to the greatest degeneracy, is a very evident maxim; because in their original formation they are furthest from it. The step from one degree of imperfection to another is not so striking, as the fall from perfect purity to absolute depravity. The state of religion in the world comes up to this observation. When it was sent down from heaven, it was amiable as its divine author, agreeable to the conclusions of reason, and the surest ally of it; in a word, every way suited to that plan of action, which is best for moral agents. But now it has contracted intricacy, and thrown off its simplicity; it has adopted severity instead of cheerfulness; and though, according to the fair exemplar engraven on the untainted mind, it was the most unfit cover for the purposes of guilt, it

is become the common instrument of inquiry and diffimulation. These are the corruptions of weak heads, and unsound hearts. The former have made religion an absurd thing, and the latter an immoral one. Like an useful medicine, it was first spoiled by the mixture of superstition, which intoxicated the reason, and then vice applied it to poison the manners of mankind. Indeed, no thorough reformation in the practice of the world can be expected, unless the theory and foundation of virtue is regulated better: and while the belief of Polytheism prevails over that of the unity, it is impossible to establish either. For till a just notion of the nature and attributes of GOD is popularly taught, the only strong basis of moral speculation is wanting to support the edifice of moral conduct. Whenever that principle is inculcated, fictitious deities will be abolished; and we shall perceive it to be with improvements in religion, as it may some day or other be with physics, Effects, before imputed each to a particular cause, will be ascribed to the true general one; for the more we know of nature and morality, the simpler we find both." "By way of introduction, said I, SOCRATES, to your thoughts on the rise of idolatry, to which your discourse has now brought you; let me ask you, whether it is not probable, that GOD would, in condescension to human infirmities, when first he settled man, that slow and shallow reasoner, in the world, make some supernatural revelation of himself to him, in a manner that should affect his senses." "I was going to have suggested the same remark, answered he; and it is from hence we may trace the origin and progress of that worship, which, though struck out in the wildness of barbarism, has been confirmed by the sober policy of legislators. For after GOD had put us to the right track, it is reasonable to suppose, he would withdraw all sensible manifestations of

himself, and suffer the speculative improvements of men to keep pace with their practical. Nevertheless, tradition would be unable to maintain genuine and unadulterated sentiments of him. The gross conceptions of men would still be seeking after some visible emblems or symbols. In such circumstances, they would most readily regard the sun, whom they found to be the great dispenser of light and warmth, as the vicegerent of providence in the system, to whom the divine energy was more especially communicated. They would consider the moon too, as advancing the fruits of the earth by her milder and qualified beams; and in a subordinate degree would reverence the stars and planets. I would even carry this fondness of the early ages for sensible exhibitions much farther. For because the splendour of these celestial fires would sometimes be withdrawn from us by their necessary courses, or concealed by clouds and tempests; it was not unnatural to have recourse to symbols of our own making, and to address ourselves to ordinary terrestrial fire. This would be indeed the emblem of an emblem; and when once men were adding to their number, one may without difficulty conceive, how soon the generality would be distracted with them, and fix their devotion on that object, which was designed only to raise the attention. In considering the several parts of the œconomy, after having paid so much honour to the active powers, they could not neglect the subject of their general operations, the earth. And so, in process of time, they fell down before the elements, which compose the world, then plants and animals, in short every thing derived from them, and adored the parents in the offspring.

Such would be religion in a state of nature, unassisted by priests and temples, unadorned by offerings and ce-

remories. But when once the arts of life were growing in the world, the rude inventor of a plough, the first sower of grain, the architect of a sorry hut, would after their death be commemorated in mournful rites, and worshipped out of gratitude. Encouraged by the invention of these arts, men would by degrees unite themselves in a social state. They would build cities, divide property, form communities, go out together to oppose their enemies. Hence legislators, magistrates, and generals would arise; and those, who by their artifice, or abilities, could gain superior dignity and esteem, would be followed by the vows and intreaties of the people into another state, as soon as they were departed from this. An imagination, that these heroes were capable of continuing their good offices to their friends in a future life, how quickly soever it may be suggested by the belief and desire of immortality incident to all men, would be the more obvious, if any tradition were remaining in the times we speak of, that good spirits were formerly sent down by providence to watch the earth and its inhabitants; and open any peculiar commissions to mankind. And now theology became more complicated every day.

The names of the sun and moon were first bestowed on a good king or queen as a compliment, to intimate, that they resembled those bodies in their beneficial effects. Afterwards, when the adoration of deified mortals was to be advanced into popular establishments, their names were given to these celestial luminaries, instead of the name of each luminary being given to them. It was said too, that they resided personally in different stars; and hence every country has adapted the sphere to its distinct heroes. Thus the transition was very easy from one sort of worship to the other. In more refined ages,

the crafty legislator pretended, that his authority came from some old local hero, who had been raised into a tutelar God, either by the superstition of the worshippers for his memory, or their pride, in thinking they deserved his particular regard. To these Gods, both family and national, sacrifices and prayers were offered, agreeable to their various historic tempers. We have already observed, how, during the worship of the natural divinities, they prostrated themselves before the elements of the sensible or irrational system. Analogous to that was the respect shewn to the elements of the rational or intellectual, which took its rise from the human apotheosis. They adored justice, fortitude, compassion, and those good qualities of the mind, that had exalted the characters of heroes. "The oddest of all worship, said I, is that performed to brutes by the Ægyptians. I have taken some pains to enquire into it; and once I received a very ingenious and elaborate letter * on this subject from a friend of mine, now travelling through the Nomes of that country, whose parts and learning I esteem highly. But I should be glad to know, whether your notion of it is the same with that, which has been taught me. "I thank you, answered SOCRATES, for mentioning a topic so material to our purpose; for some time ago I questioned a learned Athenian, who had travelled into Ægypt, and received satisfactory information concerning it. Briefly then, it was indebted for its beginning to the animal hieroglyphics, intended to express the histories and powers of their ancient deified heroes. These pictured symbols, which were emblematical of their characters, both before and after the apotheosis, being changed into living ones, that devotion, which was designed to be conveyed through the medium of the figure or animal to the

* See Letter LXXV.

God, was at last paid ultimately to the animal. From hero-worship is derived an infinite variety of legends and fables, to disguise the real objects of it; for when men began to reason on these points, and applied their natural understandings to examine matters of religion, they thought it absurd to deify their own frail and imperfect species. The priests (who were originally appointed by the legislators of governments and commonwealths to serve many purposes of use to society) sounded an alarm at these enquiries, which struck at the most lucrative part of superstition. This occasioned their pretending, that the greater hero Gods were expressive of the several attributes of the first cause. And in Ægypt particularly, they invented the physical mythology, and new allegorical ceremonies, to conceal the foibles and moral blemishes recorded in the histories of their heroes and tutelary deities. "These accounts, returned I, are very plausible, and coincide nearly with what I have heard. But give me leave to ask your thoughts on the dispute so much agitated between the Greeks and Ægyptians, whether Greece borrowed Gods from Ægypt, or Ægypt from her. Several treatises have been written on both sides, and copies of them have been transmitted to the learned in both nations. EURYDAMAS, the chief priest in the temple at Eleufis, has gained great credit by his performance in defence of the Grecian claims. I am told a priest of Heliopolis has lately writ an answer to him.

"It is a dispute, replied the philosopher, in which no man of sense interests himself, and which concerns only those formal antiquaries, who lay much weight on points of imaginary moment. To me it seems wrapt up in impenetrable darkness; and to this the forgeries produced on both sides have not a little contributed. If I

have any opinion on the subject, it is this : since it is generally allowed, that Ægyptian colonies settled here, I think it likely, that the science of religious rites, and the characters of heroes fit to be made Gods, with the names proper to be given them, were brought from thence, and applied to persons in our own country. Many reasons might be offered in support of this sentiment ; but I wave going into a detail of them. And thus you have my thoughts on the origin and progress of idolatry, a subject, the curiosity of which is inferior to nothing but its importance. I have delivered myself openly to you, who are my friend ; as some would say, *dogmatically*, and not after the manner of those cautious conversations, which I hold in public with the sophists.

If you would know, why I profess not these things, and undeceive mankind ; I answer it is against my principles to disturb the religion of my country. Wise men in every age are acquainted with all that I have communicated to you ; and when they meet with a fair opportunity to work, or a fair disposition in their neighbours to bear a reformation, let them zealously endeavour to effect it ; but gradually, and not at once ; but gently, and not forcibly. Let them address their arguments to the reason, without using such methods of conviction, as may stir their own passions, or excite the stubbornness of mankind. Thus SOCRATES discoursed, while I was lost in admiration of him.

C.

L E T T E R CVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

I have received a letter from HYDASPES the chamberlain, which contains the melancholy news of MEGABYZUS's death, and some friendly cautions with regard to my own safety, now endangered by the intrigues of my powerful enemies. Less solicitous for my private welfare than that of Persia, I poured out my supplications to OROMASDES, that he would not permit the detested author of ill to bring any farther misfortunes on the empire, when he ought to be satisfied with having deprived ARTAXERXES of his wisest counsellor. I had scarce time to recover myself from the impression which this fatal event made upon me, when a bark sent expressly from Ephesus brought me a dispatch, signed with the king's own hand, and sealed with the royal signet, which enjoins me immediately to repair to Thebes, to foment the practices of the Median faction in that city. I own to thee, noble scribe, I was not less surprized at the order itself, than the manner of wording it, and my own designation for the business. The Thebans have been reputed by the most understanding people here, to have been, ever since the change in their government after the defeat of MARDONIUS, firmly attached to the Lacedemonians, who have laid them under stricter ties by sacrificing Plataea last year to their resentment. The king's letter is drawn in short and general terms, giving me no

particular directions to what persons I am to apply, or what offers I am to make those, who shall be ready to assist me. It is likewise unaccompanied with any letter or explanation from the ministers, as thou knowest is constantly practised in a business of this nicety and importance. All these circumstances induce me to think, not only that thou wert unacquainted with it, but that the whole is a contrivance of my enemies to remove me from a place, where a five year's residence enables me to perform the duties of my station, to another, where I have no correspondence, and can hope for no success. But as I shall always esteem the king's orders, however obtained, too sacred for me his poor slave to dispute, I shall take a journey to Thebes in the retinue of an Athenian agent, who is sent thither to treat of an exchange of prisoners. From thence you may expect to hear of me. In the meantime I presume to hope, that under the shadow of thy protection, I may find a secure shelter from the calumnies of my opposers.

ATHENIAN NEWS.

The plague is renewed at Athens, and spreads daily. The Peloponnesian forces assembled at Corinth under AGIS king of Sparta, but were prevented from invading Attica by the earthquakes, which have happened there, as well as in several parts of Eubœa and Bœotia. In this city, part of the fortifications, and some public buildings, particularly the Prytaneum, were thrown down by the violence of the shocks. Two thousand Athenians in sixty gallies commanded by NICIAS, after making an unsuccessful descent in the island MELOS, passed over to

Oropus, and advanced to Tanagrum in Bœotia, where receiving a reinforcement out of Athens, they defeated the natives and set up a trophy.

P.

L E T T E R CVIII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Bubastus.

HERODOTUS has accompanied me through the Delta; for having visited Ægypt a second time, he now is taking another journey into the east, in order to complete that noble work, which was read with applause at Athens some years ago; and to collect materials for a particular history of Assyria and Babylon, which the world may one day expect from him. There is a city of ancient fame in Palestine, lately rebuilt by the favour of our august monarch, after it had lain in ruins for several years from its destruction under the later Assyrian kings, which he designs to see in his way.

In our return from the pyramids, we came directly to Sais, a place of such fame and antiquity, that no curious traveller would omit seeing it. The night we arrived there, the grand festival of the lighting of lamps was solemnized, which is observed after a peculiar manner. All the houses throughout the town of Sais are illuminated with rows of lamps set round the windows on the outside; at which time a great sacrifice is performed to the guar-

dian Deity of the place, to which as many, as can conveniently, resort from all parts of Ægypt. But those, who cannot be present there at the celebration of it, neglect not, wherever they are, to solemnize the night, and to set out lights before their houses. By this means, not only the town of Sais, but the whole country of Ægypt, is illuminated on that night. The Deity, in honour of whom the festival is kept, is called by the Greeks, MINERVA; but, if I conjecture right, with the Ægyptians is no other than their Isis, who, as I have elsewhere hinted to you, is made universal nature, though differently specified, and partially considered, upon different occasions, under the several powers and attributes, which the Greeks ascribe to their respective divinities. The use of lamps and torches both in religious worship, and for the purposes of common life, were (the Ægyptians say) originally their invention, and first received from them. But however that be, it is certain, they had them very anciently in their religious revels and ceremonies; and the application of them to the mysteries of their worship, among other divine symbols, has rendered the symbol itself so sacred in the hieroglyphics, that a lamp in that picture-character implies the whole mystery of the Ægyptian religion. From the use of torches and lamps, thus introduced into their religious ceremonies, came the practice of burning them at the shrines of illustrious personages, whom the passionate devotion of their friends desired to honour as divinities, and to rank among superior natures; of the antiquity of which custom a remarkable monument remains in Sais to this day. MERCHERINUS, the 7th king of the Memphite dynasty, to soothe his grief for the loss of an only daughter, erected for her a magnificent repository adjoining to his palace, and ordered a case of wood to be made in the shape of an heifer, richly overlaid with gold, to inclose her re-

mains; intending thereby, that divine honours should be paid to her memory, and to graft her worship upon the reigning superstition of Ægypt. The heifer is as large as the life, in a kneeling posture, and covered with a scarlet pall. Between the horns is set a circle of gold, resembling the rays of the sun. He appointed a certain number of priests to burn incense before it in the day time, and to light up lamps round the chamber in the night, and settled a stipend upon them to continue the ceremony for ever. They constantly once a year bring out the heifer into the open air, after the celebration of certain rites, which may be mysterious, but seem highly absurd in the vulgar account. For in these rites they are said to scourge a certain Deity, whose name the profane are not to know. The remains of the ancient palace at Sais are magnificent. The temple of the Goddess, whom the Greeks call MINERVA, contains the sepulchres of those ancient kings, that were natives of the Saite nome. In the body of this temple is a magnificent stone chamber, the columns of which are carved in imitation of palm trees. Here are seen several of those obelisks, which were the ancient representations of the celestial divinities; and near to them is a stone basin or lake; the workmanship of which is much admired. An inscription on the pavement of this temple countenances the opinion I have advanced, that the Deity of the place is ISIS. The inscription runs thus: "I am all, that has been, that is, and that shall be; and none among mortals has hitherto taken off my veil." AMASIS, who subdued Apries, the last of the lineage of the Memphite kings, raised a portico to this building, which for its height and dimensions, and the largeness of the stones that compose it, exceeds every thing of that kind in Ægypt. He placed about it Colosses and Sphinxes of a prodigious size. A little above

the town is a grove called the sanctuary of OSIRIS, where the Saïtes maintain his sepulchre to have been.

We passed from Sais to Bubastus, which is near the full extent of the Delta, part of the way by land, and part through the cuts, that communicate between the several channels of the Nile. It were endless to describe to thee, CLEANDER, the beauty and richness of the country, or to enumerate the many ancient cities and towns, which presented themselves to our notice in the whole way. But, indeed, though all bespeak the magnificence and glory of this ancient kingdom, I know not any that affords a sight more pleasing than the city where I now am. It is situate, where the Bubastic branch of the Nile separates into two channels; one of which discharges itself into the sea at the Tanitic, the other at the Pelusiatic mouth. These streams form a perfect peninsula, in which stands the temple of Bubastis; the city itself lying part between these streams, and part scattered on the two opposite sides of the Nile beyond where the streams divide. The ground on all sides, whereon the buildings of the city are erected, was raised by SESOSTRIS, and afterwards by the Æthiopian king to a greater height than any other town in Ægypt. The peninsula only with the town remains on the same level it always was, and is joined by a narrow isthmus to the land, along which is a vista of thick trees of the tallest growth continued for the length of three stadiums into the town, and leading through the forum up an ascent to the temple of Mercury. The temple of Bubastis, in length and breadth a stadium, is likewise encompassed with a thick grove, that casts a delightful shade, and is reflected on the water. It has a stately portico thirty cubits in height, upon which are figures and bas reliefs of six cubits; and round the extremities of the island runs a parapet of stone, adorned

with much curious sculpture. The temple, with the plantations about it, lying thus in the middle of the town, and surrounded with the water, has a most beautiful effect, as you look down upon it from the city, on every side. The goddess BUBASTIS is by the Greeks called DIANA, but is in reality ISIS, if one may regard the ancient inscription upon her pillar at Nyfa in Arabia. A little above the town begins that famous cut, which was intended for a communication between the Nile and the Red Sea. The digging of it was first attempted by NECO the son of PSAMMETICHUS, and twelve thousand men perished in the work. DARIUS, after him, made a great progress with better success, but without completing it; discouraged, as the tradition goes, by the report of his surveyors, who apprehended it would, when finished, let in the sea upon the lower Ægypt, the level of the Arabian gulf being, as they thought, higher than the Delta. The Ægyptians solemnize their religious revels at most of their towns through the Delta several times in the year. But those are most frequented, which attend the great sacrifices performed at Bubastus. Great numbers of both sexes come down the Nile at these times in boats together; and the men and women, besides children, that are brought to Bubastus on occasion of these solemnities, are computed by the inhabitants to be seldom fewer than seventy thousand. Their music all the way is a strange dissonance of flutes, crotala, bad voices, and clapping of hands. At every town by the water side they stand up to the shore, to give the women in the boats an opportunity of calling out to those at land, who never are at a loss to answer them in the peculiar ribaldry of their water-language. While some of the women are engaged in this scurrilous di-

version, the rest are dancing, or making ridiculous gestures.

Strange it is, CLEANDER, and unaccountable, that such mean buffooneries should ever be mistaken for religious rites, or made preparative to the celebration of one of their greatest festivals. But it has been the policy of our government never to interfere with such national extravagancies, as are merely adapted to the genius of the vulgar. For as these institutions fall in with the natural bent of the common people, at the same time that they have the sanction of religious ceremonies, there is nothing they would with greater difficulty give up. The Ægyptian priests could not have taken a surer method for establishing their own authority, than by accommodating the national rites to that strong propension to farcical pomps and revels, which no where prevails more among the common sort, than in Ægypt. The people thus gratified and amused, according to their own sense of things, and indulged in all their grossest prejudices presume not to arraign the superior wisdom of their teachers, but assent with an implicit reverence to their dictates.

I shall in a very few days set sail from Pelusium. HERODOTUS will part from me at Magdolum to pass over mount Casius, and by the lake Serbon into Palestine. That inquisitive traveller has taken abundant pains to examine into the learning of the Ægyptian priests, and sift out all the recondite doctrines of their religion; yet, after all, he has cause to complain of their mysterious reservedness. It is discouraging enough, I have often heard him say, to an accurate historian, who is to treat of their religious ceremonies, that he must, in many things, either

affect the same mysterious secrecy himself, or appear to posterity to have been a collector of senseless and ridiculous fables. Adieu.

L.

L E T T E R CIX.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Thebes.

I have been arrived some days, noble scribe, in this city; and whilst CRITIAS, the Athenian agent, whom I accompanied, was employed in negotiating an exchange of prisoners, I endeavoured to procure the intelligence of the general disposition of the state, and the reliance, which can be made on the descendants of those citizens, who were formerly in the Persian interest. My enquiry was much furthered by CRATIPPUS, who has lately removed hither from Sparta, in order to penetrate to the bottom of an intrigue, which is carrying on between Thebes and Corinth. I leave his own letters on that affair to speak his vigilance and industry; but I ought in justice to myself to add, that he concurs with me in opinion, that my orders were grounded on false information. Thou wilt be able to judge, how impracticable it would be to attempt any change of government here, when I tell thee, that the management of affairs is wholly in the hands of the Lacedæmonian faction. The senate is composed of their creatures; the Polemarchs, or chief magistrates of the city, who are chosen annu-

ally, and the Bœotarchs or governors of Bœotia, over which the Thebans claim a jurisdiction, are in the same interest; and the better to curb any attempts in favour either of Athens or Persia, a strong garrison is always kept up in the Cadmèa. The Lacedæmonians have much gained upon the affections of this people, by the severities, which for their sakes were inflicted upon the Plataeans. Besides they are of all the Grecians the most difficult to be forced out of any interest and alliances, in which they have been long engaged. With regard to the remains of the Median faction, which in the king's letter are represented as considerable both for their weight and number, it is a fact well known here, that the chiefs amongst them were delivered up by the Thebans to PAUSANIAS, the Spartan general, who put them to death at Corinth, that the Greeks might from their example be warned, what punishment those were to expect, who deserted the common interest of their country to join with a foreign invader. This had the desired effect; and the descendants of ARTAGINUS and TIMAGENES are so far from having any inclination to revenge the death of their ancestors, that, had I applied to them, they would in all probability have delivered me up to the magistrates. As I therefore imagine, it cannot be the intention of my royal master, that I should expose myself to danger, without any prospect of doing him service, I suspend the execution of my orders, till I receive thy answer, which I shall expect in this city; for the increase of the plague at Athens renders my removal thither extremely hazardous. If the supreme council think my further residence here unnecessary, I desire leave to take a progress to the celebrated temple at Delphi.

The magistrates of Thebes have received an express, with an account of the ill success of DEMOSTHENES the

Athenian against the Ætolians. That general had some success on his first invasion of their country; but the natives having assembled their forces, attacked his army in a forest surrounded by mountains, (the passes of which they had seized) and gave it a total defeat.

Potent lord, it is from thee I expect my chief support under the uneasy state of mind, to which the calumnies of my enemies have reduced me. The effects of their malice, in the objections they make to my conduct, are as weak, as their malice itself is strong. When they reproach me with having made no friends to Persia, do they consider, that for me to have concerned myself in practices of that nature, without particular instructions, would have been highly unwarrantable, and only brought ruin on my own head from all quarters, without advancing in one point the interest of ARTAXERXES? 'Tis even more than probable, that those, who now blame me for inactivity, would then have been as liberal of their censures against my intermeddling without orders, and have exerted their best endeavours to procure a disavowal of my conduct. When they accuse me of conversing only with the friends to peace, they shew their utter ignorance of my course of life at Athens; else they would know, that I have acquaintance enough in both parties to discover the secrets of each, and that I form my accounts impartially from their different representations.

If PHILEMON honours me with his friendship, and NICIAS condescends to take a frugal meal at my house, I have received civilities on the other hand from DEMOSTHENES and EPIGENES; and not long before I left Athens, CLEON sent to assure me, upon occasion of some business which I offered to transact for him at Ephesus, that he harboured no malice against me for what happened

last year in relation to the Iambics *. It was that unlucky affair, I am convinced, which gave a colour to the charge against me of intermixing in the cabals of Nicias's faction. But if thou canst excuse an imprudence, which the warmth of wine and jollity gave rise to, I can assure thee upon the forfeiture of thy patronage, which I prefer far beyond any interest or concern of my own, that I will religiously avoid making myself obnoxious to any party for the future, except such as the king's service shall at any time oblige me to act against. I have troubled thee thus far out of that regard, which every man owes to his reputation; for otherwise I desire not to be made the object of court intrigue. Suffer me to retire in peace to my paternal farm in the shady vale near the temple of the Ephesian DIANA; or quit the tumultuous forum of Athens for the solitary groves of the Bactrian Magi. Wrapt in their thickest shades, I may forget the distracting cares of life, and the perplexities of business. The change will not only be for my quiet, but advantage; here I may learn to be an abler minister, but there to be a better man. Adieu.

P.

The 20th of the month Munychion.

* Page 5.

L E T T E R C X.

SMERDIS TO CLEANDER.

THE insolence of the Greeks is inexcusable, CLEANDER. If they enjoy advantages peculiar to themselves, this should not be matter of triumph, since they cannot be assured of their continuance. How speciously was the liberty of Persia guarded by the wisest laws, and severest discipline, when the establishment suffered an unavoidable revolution to its disadvantage? CYRUS, the worthiest of all princes, who had been educated in the schools of justice and moderation, was the necessary cause of this change. His great mind could never meditate the oppression of his country, though the accession of Media by inheritance, a vast kingdom, under his absolute sway, and the additional conquered provinces, had sufficiently enabled him to compass it. This accumulated power however devolved to a less worthy successor; and thou knowest the sequel.

Liberty, which is the secure enjoyment of natural rights under the salutary restrictions of law, was long the inheritance of the Persians. The prince, the satraps, and the people were in subordination one to another; but their dependance was solely on the laws, to which they owed a common obedience. The prince was supreme, and enjoyed the distinguishing marks of royalty; but in his youth he was not exempt from the rigorous discipline of a Persian education. In the rest of the constitution (which

is peculiar to Persia) the rank of the citizens was determined ordinarily by their years; and the duties, privileges, and honours of the state were adapted to the particular stages of youth, manhood, and old age: but the greatest share of dignity and power was reserved for the last, to crown those, who had shewn a decent compliance with the laws, in a regular and laudable conduct through the former. The next honourable rank was manhood, to which the citizens were admitted, if they had passed their youth in obedience, military exercises, and honesty. Thus recommended, being arrived at maturity of strength and judgment, they were admitted into active life, pleaded as advocates, or presided as judges; had the charge of the revenue, or employments of distinction amongst the soldiery; or bore arms in the lowest capacity, as the state required, according to the determination of the aged, who having passed those offices with reputation themselves, governed the inferior orders, and regulated them by their counsels. Thus was every one engaged to submission, and obedience to the laws, by the hopes of arriving one day at the administration of them. This expectation kept the eager ambition of youth, and the cooler, but no less dangerous, designs of manhood, in proper bounds, till age admitted them with safety to a trust, for which their habitual virtue and experience qualified them. Thus private obedience to legal authority was easily kept up, which is the great bulwark of public liberty, and which free states find much difficulty in maintaining; because the restraint of it is mistaken for slavery by the injudicious multitude, who delight in tumult and irregularity, as certain indications of freedom.

This frame of government our countrymen had so much reason to be satisfied with, that they never shewed any dis-

position to innovate, but rather to confirm and perpetuate it. To this end their wisdom was extraordinary and unparalleled; they had long known the necessity there was of forming soldiers by a regular education; and therefore they had trained up their children from their infancy in hardiness, exercise, and coarse diet sparingly dealt to them, which their keen appetite and ready digestion converted into nutriment, leaving no superfluity for noxious humours: they were so far from needing the evacuations of physic, that those of nature were not frequent. They never tried the vicissitudes of swollen bodies and emaciating diseases; their nerves were never high strained by an heated blood, nor relaxed by indolence, but were gradually confirmed in that state, which is best suited to the operations of the body, and most helpful to those of the mind. The Persians had used themselves to the method of disciplining the youth for war; and the same wisdom suggested to them, that it would require no less care to train them up for society and the duties of peace. We think it preposterous, said they, to collect a large body of men and send them out to fight our battles, without regard to previous discipline. How then can we expect, that every thing, that bears the form of a man, should be fitted for the manifold duties of society? If we would secure our government, we must encourage the growth of moderation and justice amongst the citizens; which having taken deep root, will not easily suffer themselves to be eradicated by those foul usurpers, avarice, cruelty, and ambition; which first make themselves masters of the human mind, and then excite it to those extravagancies, that lay waste the most flourishing kingdoms.

An institution of the youth in social qualifications was therefore agreed upon: but the parent was thought an

improper person to be entrusted with it, lest the children might receive any wrong bias from his sentiments, his example, or his partial regard for them. Public schools were appointed; and the wisest of the Magi to preside and instruct the young Persian, not indeed in music, in rhetoric, and the fictions of poets, but the simple qualifications of speaking truth, and practising justice; where they were taught, that veracity was always graceful, however unadorned; and learned as much to fear the practice of fraud, as the young Spartan the discovery of it. Their acuteness was nevertheless employed, though not in acting, yet in tracing out falsehood and treachery: for this purpose intricate cases were devised by their masters, which they were obliged to unravel, and disclose all the latent fallacy, that might screen an offender, or prejudice the innocent; and to shew the due merits of each party in the case proposed.

All the little differences and quarrels, that arise among playfellows, were examined into, and decided by the strictest rules and forms of justice, where they had frequent occasion to act the part of judge, accuser, and criminal, under the inspection of a master, who never failed to put the sentence in execution, if just; if not, to punish the judge for his ignorance or partiality. Thus were they always ready to become any station in the community, that of a judicious magistrate, an honest and discerning advocate, an able governor, or an obedient inoffensive citizen. Thus had they learned the social duties, before they had need of them; for it was thought more salutary, that the manly carriage should make some incroachments on youth, than that there should be any danger, by the neglect of such discipline, that the follies of youth should be propagated into manhood, the public assemblies be interrupted with petulancy, and misguided by ill-

informed judgments, or the lives and valuable privileges of a people become the sport of a boyish levity.

Thus the basis of our establishment was the virtue of the citizens; a more durable and substantial one than can be supplied by all the arts of policy, which sometimes pretend to separate the public good from honesty, its natural ally and support, or make use of a counterfeit appearance of her. But where she resides, she not only guards the common liberty, but enlarges the happiness of each individual; she strengthens all ties both natural and social; she cements families; preserves the filial and conjugal affection pure; sweetens converse with humanity; heightens acquaintance into friendship, and sets no bounds to the exercise of benevolence. The allies of a virtuous nation can steadily rely on its fidelity, and its enemies are afraid of the vengeance of a people, who are lovers of justice, and are always kindled with indignation and resentment at the breach of it.

H.

L E T T E R CXL.

SMERDIS TO CLEANDER.

I doubt, whether in the various states of Greece you will find one government of a more plausible frame than that I have described, or more founded in nature. For nature has laid down a plan for us in most things; and the nearer approaches we make to her, the more we advance toward perfection in our undertaking. Now the plan, which nature has given us for government, is a single family; which is indeed a little natural kingdom; and a kingdom of the greatest extent can be looked upon as no other than a large artificial family. And it is very easy to observe, that the ancient Persian government in its parts and œconomy bore a very near resemblance to this original pattern. Perhaps you will be surpris'd, that our unpolish'd ancestors, who had neither arts nor literature amongst them, and were satisfied with the scanty products of Persia, which scarce afforded them food and a covering to their bodies, should have been so successful in their polity. Possibly their being uncivilized is the very reason of it; and their utter ignorance in the refinements of politics made them more attentive to nature. You know, tradition informs us, that in the early ages of the world each family was a sort of independent community; and the head of it exercised a princely jurisdiction over all the branches. We will suppose then, that a number of these small princes with paternal power are assembled together, with design to agree upon terms of community; per-

haps on the summit of a hill, in token of their eminence, whilst their numerous progeny expected below the issue of their counsels. I will not take upon me to relate the debates, which arose in the venerable assembly; but it is by no means difficult to find out the result of them. They perceived there was little occasion for any thing new, toward forming a community, besides living together. It was agreed, that the fathers of families should retain the same authority over, and concern for, the whole, which each had before in his respective family; that the younger men should continue to be active and obedient in executing the commands of the elder, whether in peace or war; and that the education of children should now be their joint care, which hitherto had employed them separately. Their children were ready to enter into society, upon the advice of their parents; for they thought their welfare could not be more safely lodged than in such hands. The ties of their obedience immediately became different. It was gratitude and filial duty (the bonds of nature) which before obliged them; but the obligations, they then submitted to, were more than nature had enjoined, and therefore they rightly expected terms for their submission. The authority of the natural parent was unlimited, because his affection for his issue was imagined so likewise; but the artificial parent being more likely to deviate from justice, mutual conditions were settled, and laws obligatory on both sides. Here you see the great marks and outlines of our ancient government in a very small compass; and all subsequent and future regulations were no more than methods used for the better establishing this form.

Though I ascribe much to the wisdom of our ancestors, I will not deny, that there was another cause, which greatly contributed to the peace and continuation of our empire; for the Persians not having then corrupted the traditions

they had received from a distant but unknown origin, believed, that OROMASDES was a lover of peace and order through all his works, which in awe of him they industriously cultivated and maintained. They knew, that commotions and tumult were the delight of ARIMANIUS; and abhorred being the instruments of his will, who had introduced discord into paradise itself, and deformed the creation; a work of such excellency, that the Almighty did not produce it instantaneously, but in six successive parts, that the everlasting genii, the satraps of his heavenly court, might contemplate its rising beauty, and adore the author! These religious sentiments, which dawned upon us at the coming of KEYOMAR, that ancient prophet, were more clearly opened by the divine instruction of ZERVAN, and the Eternal Wisdom of OUSHANG *, till ZURDUSHT's irresistible beams dispersed all remains of darkness †.

H.

* A book of the highest authority among the followers of the Magi.

† The reader will find, that in this and the other letters where the Persian religion is treated of, the sentiments are exactly agreeably to Dr. Hyde's account of it.

L E T T E R CXII.

GOBRYAS TO CLEANDER. From Ecbatana.

IT is natural for any one, whose reputation is attacked by injurious calumnies, and whose warmth is heightened by a consciousness of innocence, to lye under a perpetual uneasiness of mind, till his honour is cleared, and his conduct justified. This makes me less surprized at those expressions of despondency and resentment, which have occurred in thy late dispatches. From the first intimation I received of the ill humour fomented against thee by the artifices of some men, and the weakness of others, I used my utmost endeavours to trace it to the source; and after discovering the causes to remove the effects of it. I found the treasurer grievously offended, that thou hast made no application to him in the course of thy employment; and for that reason transmitting thy appointments with a sparing hand. His enterprising genius, which all along declared itself for an immediate imbarking in the war, was of course opposed to the calmer and more considerate measures of MEGABYZUS and myself. As he observed, thy letters afforded no grounds to his extravagant projects, he fell in the more readily with the informations of TIMOCLES, the Eubœan. Pleased with the flattering discourses of that vain rhetorician, and elated by the applause, which he heard was given to his counsels by the younger satraps, and officers of the

army, he procured that letter, which sent thee to Thebes, whilst I was employed in settling the affairs of my deceased friend, MEGABYZUS. At the same time so certain was he of the success of his Theban alliance, or perhaps so bent on thy ruin, if it miscarried, that he proposed to remove thee from Athens, asserting there were unanswerable objections to thy behaviour there; and that TIMOCLES should be ordered to supply thy place. The king absolutely refused to consent to this alteration, and took frequent opportunities to commend thy services publicly. Soon after arrived thy letter, which gave a very clear and ingenious relation of the state of Thebes, confirmed by the dispatches we received at the same time from CRATIPPUS. TERIBAZUS was then obliged, though with reluctance, to confess he had been mistaken in the advice, which occasioned the king's letter; and, in order to cast the blame from himself, accused TIMOCLES of deceiving him, who, he said, ought to be well acquainted with those parts of Greece. The Eubœan was summoned before the council of seven; but he found means to make his escape; and it is strongly suspected, that the accusation and the escape had their rise from the same quarter. Thou hast reason to be satisfied with the shame, which overwhelms thy enemies, after the defeat of all their schemes; and thy credit with the king and ministry is more established by this fruitless attack, than if it had never been put to a trial. How far I engaged in your support, I leave others to inform you; but it would be injustice to the generous friendship of HYDASPES and INTAPHERNES, not to assure you, that, had their own honour or safety been concerned, they could not have exerted themselves with more zeal and assiduity than they did. The king himself told me, when I obtained his leave for your Delphic journey, that no disgust of any of his ministers should lessen his regard for your

merit; that the punctual payment of your appointments should be his particular care: "and, continued our gracious master, I do not wonder this Theban business has given **CLEANDER** uneasiness. I too easily believed what carried a specious appearance; but though my servants have sometimes deceived me, they never yet had the art to make me persist in my error, in order to screen their own."

APOLLONIDES the physician was condemned to the cross, and executed just before we left Susa. Thou knowest, that his crime, for the sake of the person concerned, must be lightly touched. **ZOPYRUS** the youngest son of **MEGABYZUS** has left the court by night; and 'tis not yet known, whither he is gone. He desired to be made governor of Damascus; which being refused him on account of his youth and inexperience, though with a promise of future favour, he said with great warmth, that this disappointment, and his mother's guilt, rendered it impossible for him to appear at court with honour.

OXYATHRES the Mede, after having been obliged to leave Scythia by the king, who at present sits upon that throne, as I gave thee an account in my dispatches last year *, has since wandered in disguise through the provinces; and though we had frequent traces of him, he made so short a stay in every place he came to, and took such precautions to conceal himself, that we could never lay hold of his person till very lately, when he was seized in passing through the Upper Ægypt by **PHARNACES** the governor of Thebes. From several informations, which I have received concerning him, there are grounds

I 2

* Vide Letter XCV.

to believe, that he was going to join *AMYRTEUS* in the fens, and was projecting great designs of bringing the *Lybians* a second time into *Ægypt*. He found means to destroy what papers he had about him, before he was secured; but very large sums of money were seized in his baggage, which were distributed amongst those, who were instrumental in apprehending him.

Soon after he was taken, he wrote a letter to the king, offering, if his life might be spared, to make an exact and sincere discovery of all the practices, in which he had been engaged, and of the persons, with whom he had corresponded; accompanied with strong expressions of remorse for his past conduct, and assurances of an inviolable fidelity for the future. The king was pleased to refer the whole affair to his council of seven, and to be present himself, when it was debated; as indeed it was very fully.

We considered, that *OXYATHRES* had been manifestly concerned in two designs of a very high and dangerous nature. The guilt of the first indeed consisted chiefly in holding licentious and seditious discourses; but in case any sinister event had happened to the empire, or the king, there is no question but a formed conspiracy had broken out.

The second was nothing less than promoting the revolt of *ARIAZUS*, and the junction of the *Scythian* forces with his.

There were likewise strong reasons to suspect, that his views, at the time of his being seized, were full as pernicious and disloyal as ever. And it was very remarkable, that during this long course of treasonable practices,

he had never once made application for pardon, or shewed the least desire of returning to his duty, till the moment that his life was in the power of a justly exasperated monarch.

As to the discoveries, which he was in a capacity of making, it was our opinion, that we knew enough of his intrigues already for any advantage, that could redound to the king and his government, by the prevention, or defeat of them; and the being acquainted with the minuter circumstances, and the names of more persons, who had engaged in such criminal designs, might tend to open a scene, which the tranquillity of the empire would require, and the humane disposition of ARTAXERXES would rather choose, not to be disclosed. For these reasons we concluded almost unanimously, that he was no fit object of the royal favour; and accordingly orders for putting him to death were sent to PHARNACES with such dispatch and secrecy, that the advice of his being executed reached this place almost before his condemnation was known, and at once put an end to all those cabals and intercessions, which were forming by his relations, (who are of the first quality in the province of Media) to save him.

I have it in charge to communicate to thee the result of a council held this night in ARTAXERXES's apartments: It was resolved unanimously, that considering the events of war, that may oblige the king to take part very soon in the Grecian quarrels, orders should be sent to the governors of Asia Minor to keep in readiness against next year a body of 60,000 men, to march at the first warning; and likewise to the præfects of Phœnicia and Cyprus, to fit out a fleet of 80 galleys, with a proportionable number of seamen. We doubt not but

the news of those preparations will strike the Greeks with astonishment; but they are solely intended to put our empire in a condition of taking such a part in the affairs of its neighbours, as may be suitable to its wealth and greatness. Farewel.

P.

L E T T E R CXIII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER.

HERODOTUS put into my hands the other day a very extraordinary and remarkable piece of history, that the priests of Memphis had given him among the memoirs which they had selected for his use out of their archives. The character of HAZIA affords an example of many excellencies, which even the Athenian ladies might copy with great advantage to their conduct.

The STORY of HAZIA.

SESOSTRIS, willing to shew his subjects, how far he had extended his conquests, brought with him into Ægypt numerous families of the east, instructed in the righteous doctrines of KEYOMAR. Amongst these was the house of BESACH, beloved for his justice and strict piety, and in the esteem of men most worthy the protection of heaven. But he was not exempt from the common

calamity: he was led away captive with his family, which he had the mortification, before he reached Memphis, to see reduced to his daughter, HAZIA, who was too young to be affected with her misfortunes, and himself, whose wisdom and experience taught him to submit to them. His two sons, who were in the vigour of youth, and had been trained up to virtue and courage, had not yet learned how to suffer; and partly through impatience of the restraints they were under in their journey, and grief at the prospect of slavery, fell into violent disorders, which might have admitted a remedy, but they refused to accept it, alledging in excuse for themselves, that they did not make a cowardly revolt from the station, which providence had placed them in, but retired at its call to the seats of bliss, from a life altogether dishonourable to themselves, and unprofitable to the world. BESACH, upon his arrival at Memphis, found, that his reputation amongst his countrymen had stood him in some stead, as he was placed above the ordinary rank of slaves, and employed about the king's household. The death of his sons however hung heavy upon his mind; and the consolation he found in his surviving daughter, was much allayed by paternal anxiety for her welfare. He thought honourably of his family, and wished her an education suitable to it; but he despaired of that at a time, when he with much difficulty procured her the necessaries of life. He resolved, notwithstanding, not to be wanting in that material part, which himself could supply; he early implanted in her bosom such maxims, as would be most serviceable, when she came to consider her condition, the seeds of humility, courage, and chastity. The forming of her mind was his peculiar care; nor did he neglect instructing her, how to express it with propriety and grace. He did not pretend to contribute the ornamental parts of a

female address; nor was he solicitous, whether she attained them or not, since without them she was less exposed to observation. Nevertheless the growing virtues he had stored her bosom with, insensibly affected her whole carriage, and gave a polish, beyond the power of art, to her person; for a graceful mein is the natural result of a cultivated mind, and where that is wanting, the refinements of a court are only specious, and want their proper foundation; they are artfully put on to represent such qualities of the mind, as are not to be found in it. HAZIA had a look of great modesty, which is so amiable in the sex; and no wonder, since she had been trained up to that virtue. She had an engaging simplicity in her countenance; for she had been taught no artifice. Her conversation was pleasing, because it flowed from humanity and reason. Her gesture and aspect were easy and becoming, because nature had not been wanting to her, and she had been careful not to deviate from it. Had she been introduced into an assembly of the highest Egyptian ladies, her behaviour would have given no offence; and had the assembly been formed of ladies from different courts, though she would have differed something from all, it is propable, her carriage, which was mostly the result of nature and virtue, would have bid fairest for their common imitation.

The foresight of BESACH, her father, and her own retired life had not concealed her from the notice of MENETH, a young gallant at court, who waited an opportunity of doing a service to HARAN the minister, that he might have some pretence of begging so small a boon, as one of the slaves of SESOSTRIS. BESACH, knowing the defenceless situation of his beauteous ward, was continually on the watch, and not a little troubled to find, that young MENETH divided all his time betwixt those walks,

which HAZIA frequented, and an assiduous attendance upon HARAN. His fears were too great not to affect the composure of his mind. HAZIA perceived a surprising change, without suspecting any additional ground for it, and would frequently retort his own precepts upon him. "Father, she would say, you have taught me, that misfortunes are the best school; that to repine is to upbraid heaven; that the necessities of life are few, and every thing else may be supplied by cheerfulness and content. How is it, that you retract your doctrines, and make me suspect their reality? Will you shew me so ill an example, as to yield to your sufferings; and deprive me not only of your life, (which your cares will soon put an end to) but even of the pattern and principles, which I have only to rely upon, if providence should make me an orphan as well as a slave?" BESACH was affected beyond expression with such discourse, and dissembled his concern as well as he could; and whenever he perceived his gloomy thoughts were likely to get the better of him, he always retired from her company. He seldom could compose himself to rest, till it was late; and frequently spent the time of sleep in uneasy reflections and broken soliloquies, wandering about the porticos and private walks of the palace, and at his return pretended he had been employed in some service by the officers of the court. His melancholy apprehensions had taken possession of him one evening, when he sat down under a low dark arch, (which led to the apartments of the slaves) ruminating on the miseries of his country, particularly of his own family, and the dishonour which seemed pointed at his daughter; when unexpectedly he saw a man glide across the court, and make directly towards the king's apartment. At first he thought it was only a creature of his own melancholy imagination, because he knew every body within the bounds of the

court was at rest at that hour, except the guards, who durst not, without some good reason, move from their posts. He indulged his curiosity so far, however, as to step gently after him, and soon found he was not deceived; he was near enough to perceive the man lay a poniard down at his feet, and with great facility loosen the bars of a window, with an instrument he had brought with him for that purpose. BESACH apprehended nothing less than a desperate assassination of the king: whereupon he drew toward him with the utmost caution, and under favour of the shade, and the man's eager attention to his design, he got near enough to snatch up the poniard, and presenting it to his breast, "Villain, said he, I will not suffer a great prince to fall by the hands of an assassin." The man fell trembling at his feet, and was going to beg for mercy, when the guards, who heard the outcry of BESACH, flew towards them in an instant. BESACH delivered him into their hands, and returned home to his daughter, fully purged of his melancholy by this lucky accident; and with the greatest cheerfulness, "HAZIA, says he, I hope you are now out of the reach of a danger, which I durst not so much as acquaint you with yesterday. That courtier, whom you have observed in your walk, and about our lodging, thinks you not without beauty, and intends to ask HARAN to oblige him with so small a favour, as one of the king's slaves." She was going to declare, how much more eligible death was, than such a stain to her virtuous family, when her father assured her, that by to-morrow she would not be in the disposal of HARAN himself, if SESOSTRIS was not the most ungrateful of all princes. Upon which he acquainted her with the happy turn, that his affairs were likely to take, which gave them both a most agreeable expectation of the event.

The next day upon examination it appeared, that the affassin had been hired to this desperate undertaking by the remains of that party, who opposed SESOSTRIS at his return into Ægypt, and had set the crown upon his brother's head. So he expired in torments, agreeably to the laws of Ægypt; and when his body was brought to the banks of the Nile to be transported for burial, the inquisitors into his life uaged him unworthy of a place of rest, and left his corps to be tossed by the waves, and exposed to devouring fishes. SESOSTRIS was acquainted with BESACH's fidelity, and ordered HARAN to reward him, as one, who had saved the life of his prince. He and his family were immediately declared free, and a small employment of some credit in the household was conferred on him. BESACH was well pleased with the security which freedom brought along with it; and his moderation was satisfied with an access of fortune, which raised him considerably above want, though not to that condition, which his services might reasonably lay claim to. For HARAN did not think proper to reward an action very liberally, the merit of which he intended chiefly to transfer upon himself. He greatly magnified his own vigilance and activity; he assured the king, he had discovered the whole conspiracy; and he put many of the nobles to death, upon slight suspicions, or private resentment. He pretended to have secured the throne to SESOSTRIS by cutting off all possibility of a future revolt, and conducted the whole with such a zeal for his service, at a time when there was some appearance of danger, that the king thought he could not sufficiently recompence him. He made open professions of his high esteem for him, and said, "the enemies of HARAN were rebels to his crown; and his subjects could not better show their loyalty, than by reverencing the man, to whom he was indebted for his kingdom." Such declarations struck the court with terror, who knew the warmth of the king's temper, and

increased the natural haughtiness of HARAN: he thought himself little less than divine, and the subjects of SESOTRIS approached him with as much awe, as a guilty mortal does the altar of the GOD, whom he fears to have offended.

BESACH could not but observe, to what an height HARAN had raised himself upon the reputation of a service, which himself had the greatest share in; but he shewed not the least disgust; he paid a reverence to his superior station without flattery, which he could not practise, though he had been a slave. However as this carriage was not so full of obeisance as HARAN expected, he seldom came into his presence. He wanted not to enlarge his fortune; and he thought himself secure in the good will of the king. But it was not long before he had reason to know, that having merit toward a prince is not a sufficient guard against those who have free access to him. HARAN was easily induced to believe, that he had not BESACH's affections, because he knew he did not deserve them; and was confirmed in this opinion by the neglect which he thought he saw in his behaviour. He had therefore been some time determined upon his ruin. How to effect this was some difficulty: disloyalty was an handle he wished for; but all suspicions of that kind would appear groundless, when charged upon BESACH. He laid out several contrivances in his mind to that purpose, and opened himself one day on that subject to MENETH, whose inclination for BESACH's daughter was now no secret to him. MENETH immediately suggested a method to him, which gained his approbation at once; for though it was exceeding cruel, it was well disguised. "Those people, said he, whom the king brought from the east, have, some of them, gained their liberty, and though they enjoy the privileges of Ægyptians, they

“repine at the servitude of the rest: they are altogether
 “disaffected, and wait for some change to their advantage.
 “They are continually infilling difficulties into the people
 “concerning religion in which they differ widely from the
 “natives. They desire nothing more than the extirpation
 “of our ancient rites, and the venerable worship of our
 “ancestors. If you would acquaint the king of the danger
 “to be apprehended from such a party, he would give up
 “the lives of so many for the peace of his kingdoms; and
 “your enemy would fall amongst the rest, without being
 “supposed to be particularly aimed at.” The bloodiness
 of this project was no obstacle to HARAN’s thirst of re-
 venge; he applauds it highly, and goes immediately to the
 king. “O SESOSTRIS, says he, the Gods have given you
 “an empire without bounds; may the days of your life be
 “without number. Your throne is now secured against
 “its most dangerous enemies; the leaders in the late fac-
 “tion are entirely taken off; and I much wondered at the
 “folly of their attempt, and could not easily conceive,
 “what numbers they would raise to seize on your throne,
 “or attempt any thing great, since their depriving you of
 “life (which was their first aim) would only have roused
 “your subjects to vengeance, instead of strengthening their
 “party. But I have since discovered, that their chief con-
 “fidence was in the discontent of those slaves, whom you
 “have brought from the east. They are very numerous;
 “and though at present low, and by no means dangerous,
 “yet may not be so easily dealt with, if an experienced
 “leader were at their head. The security of the crown is
 “my sole interest, and the spring of my ambition. I am
 “alarmed at the distant approaches of danger, and would
 “even have the possibility of it anticipated.” The king’s
 answer was short and determinate, that he confided in him
 for the suppression of those rebels.

This was sufficient authority for HARAN; he formed a decree under the royal name, with accusations highly aggravated against that miserable people, who were to be put to death wherever they were found through the kingdom; and the magistrates were strictly charged with the execution. He immediately communicated this to his confident; "and now, MENETH, says he, success depends solely on ourselves; and the first step toward it is to secure BESACH in some safe place, lest he apply to the king, or by any means escape the general massacre." MENETH was glad to remove such an obstacle to his vicious inclinations, and undertook the performance of that part. "I know, says he, his constant walk is northward of the city: he shall be seized this very evening by faithful hands, and conveyed down the river to that old castle, which stands where the Nile divides itself." The proposal was well received, and he went immediately to command the execution of it. MENETH was in much anxiety for the event, till toward midnight, when one of the villains whom he had employed, returned to inform him, that every thing was conducted with secrecy, and that BESACH was under a guard in the castle. He no sooner heard this, than he went to BESACH's house, and almost forcing an admission to his daughter; "HAZIA, said he with a dejected air, it is necessity, and your extreme danger only, that could make me break in upon your retirement at so late an hour. You must have heard, that the court entertains some jealous of your nation; and at the hazard of my life I will venture to inform you, that it will not be appeased without shedding of blood. BESACH, your father, is apprehensive of it, and is fled, flattering himself that your weak sex would be your protection; but I myself saw the decree, which enjoins a general slaughter without any exemption. The hazard I run in this discovery ought to merit your confidence, which if you please to repose in

“me, it may be your preservation. I can lodge you near the king’s apartment till the execution be over, with the greatest privacy and security to your life and honour; and will afterward procure your pardon, or the means of escape.” HAZIA trembled at this account; she knew not what part to suspect; and her father’s not returning seemed to be a confirmation of it. She wept bitterly at the apprehension of such a slaughter of innocent people, whom she was allied to; besides the uncertainty of her own and her father’s safety. She had no inclination to put herself into the hands of MENETH; but there was little room for deliberation, when she had no other protection at hand: she accepted therefore the offer of being lodged near the royal apartment, which seemed to presage nothing dishonourable. She was not disappointed to find, that he made her frequent visits there, and teized her with a passion, which she was little disposed to attend to. However, she bore it with indifference at first, because she knew the palace was her sanctuary; and the guards posted at convenient distance might easily be alarmed. But when MENETH magnified her obligations to him, and talked to her as one indebted to him for her life, she could not bear to be upbraided with a favour, for which she could make no return. Her condition grew exceeding irksome; and at the peril of her life, she resolved upon an expedient to alter it. There was a spacious gallery adjoining, adorned with the statues and effigies of ancient kings and lawgivers, and furnished with inestimable volumes of priests and poets, the improvers of human society. Here SESOSTRIS spent several hours every day, ruminating upon the duties of a prince and the arts of government; and while he was thus engaged, HAZIA had the boldness to break in upon his retirement, and throwing herself prostrate, in the utmost confusion, and with some extravagance of gesture; “O king, said she, famed for your greatness of soul more than conquest, do not

“ stain your glory by destroying the life of a helpless virgin,
“ I am the daughter of BESACH, who ask mercy of SESO-
“ TRIS. Do not shed the blood of him, whose fidelity pre-
“ served you from the hand of a vile assassin.” The king
was disturbed at her appearance and said, “ Lady, your
“ mind is disordered; your own melancholy creates your
“ distress. BESACH and his family are ever entitled to my
“ favour.” He immediately withdrew, and ordered, that
BESACH should give an account of this interruption.
HARAN was greatly alarmed at the news of this incident,
and going instantly to the king, took the advantage of his
opinion, that HAZIA was distracted, and told him, she
was put under proper care, till her father’s return, who was
said to be abroad. The king was pretty well pacified with
this account. A report, that SESOSTRIS had made enquiry
after BESACH, had now reached the ear of those who had
him in custody; which so terrified them, that they fled
with great precipitation, and left him to his own disposal;
which he no sooner observed, than he seized the opportu-
nity, and returned to Memphis, where all occurrences
during his short absence soon came to his knowledge. He
repaired immediately to the king and assured him, that the
interruption of his sacred retirement from his daughter was
the effect of her well-grounded fears; that she had reason
to apprehend the worst of ills from the undeserved malice
of his enemies; that himself had just been released from
prison, where he had suffered great hardships, and expected
death, without knowing for what crime, or by whose order.
“ Nor do I expect to prolong life by this escape, added he;
“ your royal decree, which pronounces all your eastern
“ captives rebels, and destines them to destruction, in-
“ cludes me in that number; and I willingly submit to
“ suffer with my countrymen, or rather would suffer for
“ them, since I have too much reason to believe myself

“ particularly aimed at, and the sole cause of their calamity.”

SESOSTRIS till now was ignorant of BESACH's relation to that people. Upon this information, his face glowed like fire; his indignation shewed itself in all his gestures; his eyes shot forth beams like those malignant stars, that threaten the world with desolation. He perceived, that he had been abused by his favourite; he saw plainly the malice of HARAN; and his abhorrence of him was raised in proportion to the abuse of his confidence. He ordered him to spend the remainder of his life in that miserable state, from which BESACH had escaped. He soon found, how indifferently his preserver BESACH had been recompensed for his service; and to make him satisfaction, assured him, that the highest honors and wealth of Memphis were open to him. But BESACH's moderation would not be prevailed upon to accept of any thing, but a small territory near Thebes for his captive countrymen; * which their posterity now enjoy, and live separate from the natives of Ægypt in the worship of the true God. The historians add, that SESOSTRIS was so captivated with the beauty and virtues of HAZIA, that he raised her to the throne of Ægypt; and that the blood of that eastern lady flowed in the veins of the Ægyptian kings through many successions. †

H.

* See Letter XLVII.

The intelligent reader cannot but observe a great resemblance between this story and that of *Ejher*.

L E T T E R CXIV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES. From Delphi.

I continued at Thebes, till a letter from the chief scribe gave me full information of the cause, as well as defeat, of my enemies designs. The testimony of my royal master in my favour, and the fortunate effects of that generous protection, which INTAPHERNES and thyself afforded to an old dependant in the time of his distress, have restored me to my former spirits and tranquillity.

I set out immediately on my Delphic expedition, accompanied by PROCLES an Athenian, and ARCHIAS a Theban, an old man of remarkable piety and simplicity of manners. The former is, like myself, induced to take this journey merely through motives of pleasure and curiosity. His agreeable turn of conversation, and equal vein of good humour, render him the best travelling companion I ever met with. The latter goes to consult the oracle on domestic concerns; and by his acquaintance in those parts of Greece, secured to us a favourable reception at the houses of our hosts on the road. After crossing the river Cephissus, we entered Phocis; and, as we approached Delphi, passed the celebrated valley, where LAIUS was killed by his son Œdipus. It lies on a descent, and is so narrow, as scarce to afford room for a single man or horse. The sepulchre of the Theban king, and a domestic, who was murdered with him, are erected in a rustic manner with piles of stones on one side of the road. The city of Delphi stands on the southern declivity of mount Parnassus,

which by an old tradition is said to be situated in the middle of the earth. It is surrounded with precipices, which form at a distance a perspective rough and wild, but romantic and agreeable; so that the place, not content with the sanctity and reverential awe inspired by the shrine of its god, has all the advantages of natural strength to defend it from sacrilegious violence. Our first visit was to THEAGENES, a priest of the temple, to whom PROCLES and myself were introduced by ARCHIAS. His house will be our lodging, whilst we stay here; and, without any disrespect to the curiosities of the place, his conversation is my chief entertainment. He has the care of the sacred records, which he has brought from a state of confusion into excellent order. His learning is extensive, but solid; rendered useful by the readiness, with which he communicates it, and amiable by the singular candor and modesty, which accompany it. He speaks of his religion in such a manner, as to support the dignity of his profession, yet without offending those, who claim a right to think and talk of it more freely. In the morning one of the Periegetai, whose profession it is to shew the antiquities of the place, made us an offer of his service, which they do to all strangers immediately after their arrival. We began with taking a general survey of the city, which is divided into three parts; the upper town, the middle one, where the temple stands, and the lower town. The city in general is but indifferently built; the streets are narrow and irregular, many of them winding round the craggy paths of the mountain. If being employed in sacred offices contributes towards rendering a people virtuous, those of Delphi are eminently so, since the service of the temple finds business for the greatest part of the inhabitants; and no small profits arise to them from the vast concourse of

strangers, who come from all parts to consult the oracle. Our guide afterwards led us to a theatre, and the portico called Lefche, where are three pictures of POLYGNOTUS dedicated to APOLLO by the Cnidians. The subject of one is the taking of Troy; of another, the embarkation of the Greeks for their return; of the third, the descent of ULYSSES into hell, as described in the *Odyssey* of Homer. The second of these pictures alone contains above one hundred figures, whose names are marked at the feet of each; which useful invention greatly assists the spectators to understand the design of the painter. We staid so long to admire the variety of countenances, habits, and attitudes, expressed with that truth of design and force of colouring peculiar to the works of POLYGNOTUS, that the evening insensibly wore upon us. We returned to THEAGENES to supper, and deferred our visit to the temple till next day.

This magnificent edifice was built in the 58th Olympiad (after the first temple had been burnt;) at the common charge of all Greece, under the direction of SPINTHARUS of Corinth, who engaged to finish it for 300 talents. Such was the veneration paid to the deity its protector, that foreign states, as well as private persons, contributed towards carrying on the work; particularly AMASIS king of Ægypt, and the Alcmeonidæ, a noble Athenian family, who were banished their native country by PISISTRATUS, and came to settle at Delphi. The front is of Parian marble; the rest of the edifice is built with a hard white stone called Porus. The pediment of the principal front is ornamented with sculptures, representing Latona, Apollo, Diana, and the nine muses. In the pediment of the western front, are Bacchus and the Menades. These sculptures were begun by PRAXIAS an Athenian, and after his death finished

by another Athenian named ANDROSTHENES. As we entered the porch, we took notice of the sentences of the seven Grecian wise men, "Know thyself, &c." left there by each of those philosophers in their hand-writing, when they visited the temple. In the same place is a brazen statue of HOMER; in the pedestal is inscribed an oracle bidding him beware of an ænigma, which, according to an old but perhaps fabulous tradition, was the occasion of his death, through vexation, that he could not interpret it. The columns within are hung round with the arms and ensigns taken at Salamis and Plataea. It was, thou mayst imagine, my noble friend, the most disagreeable circumstance in taking a survey of the temple, to see so many eternal monuments of the Grecian victories over us consecrated solemnly to the deity of the place, and descending to posterity as indelible marks of their triumphs and our disgrace. I beheld with concern the statues of MILTIADES, and the ancient heroes of Attica, CECROPS and PANDION, carved by PHIDIAS out of the booty taken at Marathon. When I went on further, and our guide in pompous language pointed to the palm-tree of bronze, and the gilt MINERVA, sent hither after CIMON's successes, it was with difficulty, that I repressed my sighs, and checked my just warmth. But I saw with secret pleasure the trophies set up by the states of Greece for their conquests over each other, which in some degree obliterate the memory of these losses, or at least render them more supportable. There is a chapel just finished out of the riches gained by the Athenians in the present war. Beaks of ships, brazen bucklers, and arms stained with blood are hung round the sides; and an inscription on a marble tablet commemorates the battle of Naupactus *, and the praises of PHORMIO

* Letter XLVI.

the Athenian admiral, with a recital of the names of the vanquished cities, Corinth, Sparta, and Megara.

The temple is in all parts embellished with innumerable presents of commonwealths, princes, and private persons, which I should tire thee to describe particularly. Deluded men! as if even the protection of their own Gods, supposing them real, could be obtained by the ambitious, the deceitful, or the covetous, for a silver vase, or an embroidered robe; or as if the pious, the humane, and the just, stood in need of such corrupt recommendations. CROESUS, king of Lydia, was during his reign the most generous adorer of the Delphic God; they shewed a golden lion, several sacrificing utensils finely embossed, and bracelets set with jewels, amounting, as they told us, to the value of 254 talents, which he sent hither at different times. There can be no stronger example than his of the fatal effects of misguided piety. The priests, not contented with amusing that unfortunate prince by dark and mysterious answers, hurried him on, by one fatally ambiguous, to the imprudent step of passing the river Halys to attack our great CYRUS, which cost him his kingdom. It was with good reasons, that after his captivity he sent to reproach the God with having ungratefully deceived a monarch, who was his greatest benefactor. Thou wilt not wonder, that the riches of the place have often exposed it to hostile fury. Not to enlarge upon the attempts of DANAUS and PYRRHUS in old times, suffice it to say, that the temple was pillaged by the Crisseans in the 44th Olympiad; and that the unsuccessful attack made by a detachment of XERXES's army was attended with too remarkable circumstances to be soon forgot.

By the particular favour of THEAGENES, we were admitted to take a short view of the sanctuary. The chafin in the earth, from which APOLLO reveals his prophetic dictates, is always covered with a tripod, a kind of hollow table with three feet, on which the Pythia is placed in a posture the most convenient to receive the inspiring vapour. A curtain made of a skin, which they call the hide of the monster Python, conceals the holy virgin from profane eyes.

As we went out of the temple, we observed a venerable old man, who looked like one of the inferior priests, employed with particular gravity in admonishing some birds to retire, who had perched themselves upon the columns and statues at the entrance. He told them that he should be extremely concerned to be instrumental in the death of animals, whose various flights foretold to mankind the unerring will of the immortal Gods. The birds seemed to take no notice of this pathetic harangue, and continued their chirping; upon which the old priest with great indignation took up a bow and arrows, that lay by him, and exerted his skill in archery so effectually, as soon to disperse these profane molesters of the temple. My friend PROCLES and myself, who with no small difficulty had preserved our gravity at the ridiculous stories of our conductor, could not upon this occasion help asking him, with a smile, the office of this priest, who seemed to have so large a share in the dexterity of the far-shooting APOLLO his patron. THEAGENES, who accompanied us, prevented him by saying, that though by his founding title χρυσοφύλαξ τῷ θεῷ, guardian of the gold of the God, he might seem to be of high consequence amongst them, his employment was really no other, than to wash the pavement of the temple with water from the fountain Castalia; to fill two marble urns, which

stand at the entrance, from that spring; to place branches and crowns of fresh laurel in proper places: and to perform those ceremonies towards the birds of which we had just been spectators.

Thou, my noble friend, who adherest to the law delivered by ZOROASTER, with a zeal and sincerity becoming its primitive professors, mayst smile at these extravagancies of the Greek superstitions; but thou wilt have no reason to be surprized at them, when thou considerest, that from the earliest ages the artful and designing have concurred to keep the credulous multitude in the darkness of religious ignorance.

P.

L E T T E R CXV.

HYDASPES to CLEANDER.

THOU wilt be surprized to hear, that ORSAMES, whom thou supposest still engaged in the mysterious learning and stupendous works of Ægypt; or whom perhaps thou flatterest thyself to be preparing for a visit to thee, in order to crown his observations with the more humane studies and finished arts of Greece; that the contemplative, the inquisitive ORSAMES has put an end to his curious voyage, and is returned to Susa. Such was the will of the wise ARTÆUS, whose commands our young friend has always been accustomed to obey, from a readiness arising not only from a principle of duty, but from a constant experience of their being the kindest as well as the most reasonable. Accordingly he flew back to court with such speed, as if he had known, that the most accomplished princess there, and the greatest succession in the empire, waited his arrival.

The friendship, which has long subsisted between the families of ARTÆUS and SISAMNES, gave ORSAMES frequent opportunities of seeing the beautiful PARMYS, before he went upon his travels. He saw and admired her; but intent on the pursuit of science, he formed no other than the distant hope of qualifying himself one day to deserve her. SISAMNES, in the mean time, descended from a long line of Hyrcanian satraps, which by the loss of two noble sons he saw ready to end in himself,

turned all his views upon his beloved PARMYS; and was looking round, among the great families of Persia, for a youth to adopt into his own, and make happy in his daughter. Nor could he long be in suspense; the heir of ARTÆUS soon fixed his choice. Educated under a father, whose virtues have placed him at the head of the supreme tribunal, and whose eloquence prevails in the council of the great king, as thou tellest us, that of PERICLES did in the Athenian assembly, ORSAMES steadily kept his eye, not on the dazzling honours, which are to descend to him, but on the glorious methods, by which they were acquired; and while he attended only to the improvement of his mind by the conversation of the wise, was not conscious, that he was observed and admired by the great. But as soon as ever this alliance was known, the public had but one voice about it; and the universal approbation it meets with, is a testimony to virtue and good sense worthy of a less degenerate age. The mighty ARTAXERXES has indeed led the way, by breaking through that frugality in bestowing honours, which, thou knowest, he so wisely observes, and continuing the dignities of SISAMNES to his son-in-law.

It was the day before the marriage, that accompanied by the polite mage TEASPES, (whom the good taste of ORSAMES had distinguished early among the sages in the Bactrian schools) I found him not at all elated at this near prospect of greatness, but engaged, as usual, in those studies, which form the patriot and the statesman. The archives of the empire lay open before him; he proposed several questions with that ingenuous vehemence, which so well becomes him; nor would he suffer us to leave him, without one of those friendly debates, which I have often described to thee among the chief pleasures of my Bactrian retirement.

Let us not imagine, my dear CLEANDER, that a young man, who comes into the world with such dispositions, comes into it too early. It might be a fatal experiment in most great families; but how few at his age have lived and thought like him? We should rather esteem it a peculiar felicity, that he is at once carried over that dangerous term of life, wherein such numbers of our noble youth lose all the fruits of their education, and receive a taint, which affects their whole future conduct. It is surely very unaccountable, that a course of luxury and riot should be held a necessary preparation to a life of virtue and honour; and the instructions and company of philosophers be considered as an impediment to our knowledge of the world. But ORSAMES will be a striking instance of the absurdity of these maxims. Nor need his learned friends apprehend, that the man of letters will be lost in the man of the world. Instead of abandoning the arts he loved, he will shew, how much they adorn the highest stations; nor will his increasing acquaintance among the great drive from his heart the companions of his studies. He will not be the less their friend, because he is in a situation to be their patron.

May the power, which watches over the fate of the empire, inspire our rising generation with an emulation of these virtues. So shall the honour of the Persian discipline be restored; and we shall be able to oppose an equal band of heroes to those shining genii among the Greeks, who make thee tremble sometimes for the throne of Asia.

W.

L E T T E R CXVI.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER. From Sparta.

WHEN we were at Thebes together, my CLEANDER, our conversation turned very much on the states of Greece, and thou wert particularly inquisitive after the policy and manners of Lacedæmon. I related to thee at that time some observations I had made, and promised to send them, on my return to Sparta, more accurately drawn up in writing. It is indeed an unhappy circumstance, that thou art prevented from visiting this seat of military virtue and unadulterated good sense, as well by the laws of the republic, as that jealous and inhospitable temper, which is the offspring of civil war. I parted from thee with uncommon reluctance, as I knew, that * the discovery of one of my letters last year in Athens, had reduced us from an open, chearful, and improving conversation, to a dry timorous, and reserved correspondence. I shall write to thee indeed at present with more freedom, not only because the city, where thou now residest, enters not into the feuds and politics of Greece, but because the subject, on which thou desirest to be enlightened, requires an explicit perspicuity. Whilst thou informest thyself of the most curious circumstances attending the most celebrated oracle in the world, let me entertain thee with the institutions and commonwealth of that lawgiver, whom the same oracle pronounced a God.

* See Letter XCI

So great was either the reputation of **LYCURGUS** to command this testimony, or so great his art in procuring it.

The country of Laconia has often changed its name and its possessors. It was called **Lelegia** from king **LELEX**; **Oebalia**, from **OEBALUS** the father of **CASTOR** and **POLLUX**, (whose amicable and united government produced the known fable concerning them) and obtained the appellation it now has from king **LACEDÆMON**. It was held first by the Achæans with **PELOPS** at their head; next by the Sparti, who were governed by **CADMUS**; then by the descendants of the Argonauts; and lastly by the race of **HERCULES**, from whom the inhabitants of our days are derived. There is something, methinks, ridiculous enough in the tedious and grave histories recorded of these men. Doubtless the craggy territory of Laconia fared like other parts of Greece, when wild and uncultivated. During the early ages, the lands, that lay near the sea-coasts, were an harbour for pirates, who put themselves under the guidance of a general or petty prince, and plundered the more fruitful, and consequently the more inhabited parts of the earth, with the greater resolution, as they imagined no man would pursue them to the barren rocks, that protected them. Such were the Achæi and Heraclidæ, the first lords of the soil, and boasted ancestors of so polished a posterity; savage robbers in their original, improved by foreign colonies, and civilized by a strange concurrence of whimsical events.

The city of Sparta (they say) owes its rise to king **LACEDÆMON**. It is of a round figure, without walls or a citadel. The houses are built with singular simplicity, for the only tools, allowed by law for building, are an axe and a hand-saw.

The Eurotas runs along the east side of the plain, in which it is situated, and often lays waste the country by its inundations. It is furrounded by hills, on one side rough and inaccessible, on the other varied by cascades and torrents, which fall into the river, that winds impetuously through the valley. The very manner of the place is suited to the hardy temper of the people.

No republic has been more various in its form than this. At first it was a monarchy, and continued in that state, till PROCLES and EURYSTHENES, the sons of ARISTODEMUS. They ruled it jointly, and from them two kings are entailed for ever on Lacedæmon. All laws were made and cancelled at their will; all magistrates were created at their pleasure, and accountable to them. Things went on smoothly in the same channel for many years, when EURYTION, through a weakness of understanding, or a mean affectation of popularity, lessened his own power, and made room for the efforts of sedition. The kings were afterwards desirous to remedy the confusion arising from the folly or vanity of their predecessor, and attempted to resume their former authority. But the people contended for their imaginary rights with such violence, that in a riot they killed one of their princes, the father of LYCURGUS. Nothing was able now to restrain their fury; they insisted on a chimerical equality of ranks, and overthrew the distinctions and necessary subordinations of society. Every man, who had the least knowledge of the laws, invented subtleties to evade them, pretended to interpret them, and would have imposed his private sense for the public opinion. In this captious disposition, the slightest offence from the magistrate confirmed the absurdity, increased the obstinacy, and raised the insolence of an exasperated multitude. LYCURGUS alone ventured to oppose the torrent with equal spirit and abilities; nor did the loss of an eye affect him,

which in a warm debate was struck out by the factious **ALCANDER**. He began with concerting a scheme among his friends for a thorough reformation; then formed a council of thirty among the principal citizens, and stationed a guard of soldiers in the forum, to prevent an insurrection; rightly judging, that a violent disease required as violent a remedy. When this was done, and the commonwealth had given him a power of new modelling the constitution, he established a senate with the kings at their head, and gave laws to the people, which, without being committed to writing, he has contrived to engrave on their hearts, by the rigor of education. They are recorded nowhere except in the verses of **TERPANDER**, who has reduced them into the measures of poetry. Their number is not large, for, as **CHARILAUS** very smartly said, "They, who use few words, can want but few laws." Fortitude and a contempt of pleasure are principally inculcated there. Every citizen is obliged strictly to conform to them; for which reason **PAUSANIAS** thought Sparta answered the truest notion of a free government, when he pronounced it to be "the empire of laws, and not of men." As **LYCURGUS** had travelled into all parts of the world, he had great opportunities of comparing the practice of different legislators. He examined the different institutions of **MINOS** in Crete, went into Spain and Africa, and even conversed with the **Gymnosophists** in India. From **Ægypt** he took the hint of making the soldiers a distinct body from those who were occupied in the labors of the tillage; and after he had compounded the best system, which the wisdom of others, or his own could invent, he forbade the laws of all states, that differed from **Lacedæmon**, to be commended, or even mentioned in Sparta. It is owing to the same caution, that no citizen is suffered to travel into foreign parts. On being asked by somebody, why he gave an aristocratical, not a popular, turn to the constitution,

he bad him "go and try the experiment at home." The question was a very odd one, in a city, that had suffered so much from the fury of the people. LYCURGUS died at Delphi by voluntarily abstaining from food, because he had solemnly obliged his countrymen with an oath to obey his laws till his return; a thing, which he never intended Satisfied, that he had lived sufficiently for his country, he chose to leave the world, when he was old, with an intrepidity agreeable to his stern character; and thought it unbecoming a great man to die timorously and weakly, or to out-live his memory and parts in indolence. His citizens pay him divine honours in a temple they have built to him, not so much out of regard to the sense of the oracle, as to the dictates of their own grateful hearts.

While he was in Ionia, he recovered HOMER's poems from the descendants of CREOPHILUS, and published them in Greece. In Crete too he put himself under the care of THALES, a writer of Lyric odes, and was instructed by him. It appears, that he had some taste for polite literature, though he has carefully extinguished the love of it in his commonwealth; for it is remarkable, that their dialect is so uncouth, and the people are taught by the law to be so sparing of words, that no man in Lacedæmon ever raised his fame as a poet. ALCMAN is the only exception to this remark; and he, by a surprizing strength of genius, has made himself admired over all Greece. The beauty and justness of his sentiments are the more striking, as the words, which clothe them, are inelegant. Besides the suppression of superfluous discourses, and the entertainments of the theatre, there is nothing tends so effectually to damp all attention to letters among the Spartans, as that institution of LYCURGUS, by which the magistrate is made the licenser of every sprightly and literary, as well as political composition; and the right of judging in matters

of taste is unnaturally transferred from the impartial voice of the public, the best and only arbiter in those cases, to the thrones of the Ephori. Such are the fetters laid upon wit in Sparta, both by the roughness of their language, and the genius of their policy.

They condemn the refinements of science and subtle speculations: they pretend, that no studies are encouraged here, but those, which strengthen the understanding, without perplexing it, and polish the manners, without enervating them. It is their opinion, that we are born for action, and not theory; and for the service, rather than the entertainment of mankind. Oratory is not only neglected, but abhorred in Sparta. They have no idea of what it is to be copious, and banished CEPHISOPHON for saying, "he could talk a whole day upon any question." A rhetorician told one of their kings, that eloquence was the most excellent gift to mankind; he answered, "You do well to say so, because, when you are commanded silence, you are useless." The sententious brevity, and exquisite poignancy of the Laconic way of talking, are grown into a proverb. They laugh at the artful turns and round periods of the Athenians, and teach their children from their infancy to comprehend much in a short phrase; to express at once their whole meaning, so as to vie in the manner of conveying their thoughts with the quickness of thought itself. Thus the Spartans are fond of dexterity, not only in the exercises of war, but in those of the understanding. They have the most exalted notions of liberty, and define it to be a contempt of death, with the love of virtue. Just before the invasion of Greece, BURIS and SPERTHES went to XERXES to be punished in the name of their city, agreeably to the commands of the oracle, as a satisfaction for the murder of those messengers DARIUS had sent to them. The

king was pleased with their bravery, and generously forgave them: he then asked them to continue with him, and commanded INDARNES to make them large offers, and press them very warmly. But they steadily refused, and told INDARNES, "He knew what it was to be a servant, but was "ignorant of the blessings of liberty; for if he had tasted "it, he would have advised them to maintain it, not only "with the weapons of a soldier, but, for want of them, "with a spade, or mattock, or any instrument of defence "they could meet with." No freedom of discourse is allowed any where but in the senate or the assembly. It is esteemed an impertinent curiosity to discuss such points, except in those places, which the magistrate ordains, or on those occasions, which the constitution marks out. A man would be branded with infamy for a minute examination into the affairs of his acquaintance; or even attending a court of justice, if his own business did not call him there.

Thou, my excellent friend, who art practised in the ways of men, must have ceased long since to be moved by the transports of admiration: but art thou not pleased with discovering, that there is one community in the world, where every individual confines his attention to that, which properly concerns himself? Free from a love of scandal, and all idle inquiries into the manners of their neighbours, (a passion, which leads to public calumny, not private reproof, and increases the impudence of bad men, without checking the progress of vice) no Spartan finds his time hang heavy on his hands. Engaged for ever in laudable pursuits, their youth is a state of temperance and exercise; their manhood of military service; their old age is spent in a healthy and full enjoyment of their faculties, in the administration of the laws, in applying their experience to the education of

others, and in the agreeable reflection, that during the course of a life variously occupied, they have scarce passed an hour unprofitably to themselves or their country.

C.

LETTER CXVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS chief scribe. From Delphi.

MY excursions from Athens are, I hope, by no means useless to the king's service. I enlarge my knowledge of the dispositions and government of the Grecian states. I transmit my observations upon the manners and curiosities both of art and nature, which occur in the places I pass through, to the ministers of the sublime court; and I endeavour at the same time, not to neglect the affairs of that city, which is the particular scene of my employment.

A meeting of the Amphictyons or states general of Greece now held at Delphi, affords me a fair occasion to lay before thee some account of their origin, form, and business. They are a part of the Grecian constitution, which the Persians have but little attended to, and which it may be highly advantageous, not to say necessary, for them to be better acquainted with, in their future negotiations here. This celebrated assembly received its name, as well as institution, from AMPHICTYON, an Athenian king; who observing, that the separate interests and dissensions, which prevailed amongst the Græcian republics, exposed them to

the invasions of their more powerful neighbours, wisely exhorted them to unite by deputies in one common body, which might, in times of danger, concert the best measures for their mutual safety, and prevent, by its salutary influence, the ill effects of private animosities, and disjointed counsels. As he was a pious as well as political prince, he put the temple of Delphi, and the sacred territory, under the care and protection of the Amphictyonic tribunal; wisely thinking, that the public defence and public religion should be matters of a general concern to the Græcians, however divided on subjects of less importance. ACRISIUS, who reigned several years after at Argos, is reported to have encreased the privileges, and regulated the laws of the Amphictyons; and is for that reason esteemed by some a second founder. The states, who enjoy the right of sending deputies to this council, are at present twelve; the Ionians, Thessalians, Bœotians, Dorians, Perrhœbeans, Magnesian, Locrians, Cætians, Phthiotians, Maleans, Phocians, and Dolopians; but it is probable, that as some may have forfeited that distinction, and others been admitted in later times, who were not originally included, the number has not been always the same. The assembly meets in the spring and autumn of every year, either at Delphi, or Thermopylæ; and every city amongst the people, who compose it, chooses two members, the one called the Hieromnemon, and the other the Pylagoras, to represent it. The former is elected by lot, and has the honour to be president of the council in his turn, to gather the voices, pronounce the decree, and administer at the sacrifices, which are made either in the name of all the Greeks, or the particular city, by which he is deputed. The latter is chosen by vote, and is properly the orator of the deputation; he delivers the opinion of his state, defends it against any accusation, and takes care of its interest upon all occasions. As soon as these deputies arrive at the place, where the Am-

phictyons are convened, they offer up a sacrifice to the tutelar Deity, at Delphi to APOLLO, at Thermopylæ to CERES. Then they repair to the assembly; but before they are admitted to take their seats, the following oath is tendered to them, which, being a remarkable one, I shall here insert.

“I swear never to contribute towards destroying any of the cities honoured with the right of choosing Amphictyons; or stop the course of their running waters, either in time of war or peace. If any person steal the offerings out of the temple of APOLLO, or assist another in so doing, I will oppose them with my hands, feet, voice, and my whole strength. Whoever infringes this oath, whether it be a state or a private person, let them be accursed of APOLLO, DIANA, LATONA, and MINERVA the provident: may their soil prove barren, their women bring forth nothing but monsters, and their animals not produce in kind. May they never perform a pure sacrifice to APOLLO, DIANA, and MINERVA the provident; and may their offerings be an abomination to those deities: May they be alike unsuccessful in war and law suits, and may their posterity be extirpated from the face of the earth.”

A perfect equality is kept up amongst the members of this great council; the representatives of the most powerful republic in Greece have no advantage or pre-eminence over those of the least. Each state from the flourishing commonwealth of Athens to the petty town of Eretria possesses the right of two votes in the persons of its deputies; and, by having an equal share in the deliberations of the Amphictyons, looks upon itself as equally concerned in the welfare of Greece. As their meetings are attended with a vast concourse of people from all parts of the country, it has been usual on particular occasions for the Hieromne-

nones to summon all the Græcians, who then happen to be resident in the place, where the assembly is held, to assist at its deliberations; with this distinction, that the latter are not allowed to vote, but merely called upon to countenance by their presence the decrees of the Amphiçtyons, and give them a fuller sanction. The power of this diet is very large, and extends to the proclaiming of war, and deciding of public differences, of which I shall mention two remarkable instances. About the time of SOLON, the Cirrhæans and Acragallidæ, besides other insolences, plundered the temple of Delphi, and disregarded the orders of the Amphiçtyons; upon which that body, after taking the advice of the oracle, declared war against them in the name of all Greece, defeated their forces, reduced the whole nation, as polluted with sacrilege and impiety, to a state of servitude, and devoted their country to the service of the God. In the accommodating way, their endeavours have not been less successful, than in the military; for when the Spartans and Argives had harassed each other by a continued war for many years, they referred their difference to the arbitration of the Amphiçtyons, who, without taking upon them to determine the justice of the cause on either side, ordered them to bring it to a short issue by a combat of four hundred men chosen out of both armies. Of late years they have intermeddled less than usual in the great affairs of Greece, and held their meetings chiefly for form sake, their chief business at present being to settle a tax upon the Græcian states for some additions and repairs to the temple of Delphi. The end of their institution was certainly to keep up a good understanding in a nation, composed of so many different governments and jarring interests; and were the leading republics disposed to accommodate their disputes, overtures towards a negotiation could not be set on foot any where, with greater weight and propriety, than in this assembly.

I rejoice to hear of the vigorous resolutions of our potent monarch. Another year can hardly pass over, before some crisis may offer itself, which may induce him to employ the forces so wisely ordered to be got in readiness. I have now discharged the duty I owe the king, as his minister in Greece; but it is a duty, no less incumbent on me, to acknowledge the protection I received from thee, noble scribe, against the aspersions, which the malice of enemies would have thrown on my reputation and conduct. Hard is it for a man, who is struggling abroad amidst difficulties and hazards in the service of his prince, to be exposed at home to the slander of the malicious, the reports of the credulous, and the judgment of the ignorant. But thou, generous GOBRYAS, proceedest not on the common maxims of courts; thou art no less steady in protecting merit than sagacious in discovering it; and as thy recommendations to preferment are never intended to serve a base unworthy end, thou scornest to give up a minister, who serves faithfully, through motives of fear or interest. May the chronicles of Persia, which transmit down thy fame to posterity, as a wise, an honest, and an able minister, when they record CLEANDER the Ephesian among those, who had the honour to execute thy commands, mention him as one, who was a follower, not of thy fortunes, but of thy virtues. Farewel.

P.

Extract of LETTERS from Athens.

OUR loss in Ætolia is considerable, not for the number of citizens, which did not exceed one hundred and twenty, but for the quality and valour of the slain. They were most of them, of the best families in Athens, and distinguished by their experience and gallantry. DEMOSTHENES, our general, has been blamed with reason for quitting the siege of Leucas, which he was in a condition of taking, to comply with the persuasions of the Messenians, who flattered him with the hopes of making an easy conquest of Ætolia. Since his defeat he has resided at Naupactus, and lately obtained a reinforcement of a thousand men from the Acarnanians, to secure that important place (whose fortifications are of a large extent) against the attempts of EURYLOCHUS the Spartan. We have lately received dispatches from him, which bring us an account, that EURYLOCHUS, with three thousand Lacedæmonians, having marched through Locris, and joined the Ætolians, laid waste the country about Naupactus, and set fire to part of the suburbs; but they no sooner heard the succours were arrived, than they retired into Ætolis, without receiving any advantage from this expedition, except recovering Molycrium for the Corinthians. But it is imagined they have a design on foot to attack Argos and Acarnania. Our advices from Sicily inform us, that CARNEADES our admiral has been killed in a sea fight against the Syracusians, and that PACHES, who succeeds him in the command, has taken Messina. We have not received so much damage from the settlement of the Lacedæmonians at Heraclea as

was expected; for the colony, instead of being strong enough to make descents into Eubœa, is much harassed by the continual incursions of the Thessalians its neighbours. The worst of our misfortunes is, that the plague still continues.

The island of Delos has been purified by order of the people, and the * quinquennial festival formerly celebrated there, revived with great pomp and solemnity. NICIAS was appointed to conduct the chorus of singers and dancers, and preside at the performance of this pious work, and has acquitted himself in the charge to every body's satisfaction; having set up a brazen palm tree in honour of the God, and consecrated a large piece of land to the service of the temple.

An Amphictyonic council is likewise established, composed of deputies from this city, and the islands of the Egean, who are to have the direction of all matters relating to the temple, to regulate the expences of the games and sacrifices, and settle the quota of money, which each state is to contribute towards them.

* A critic might venture from the mention of this council, not the least trace of which is to be found in any ancient author, to call in question the genuineness of our letters. But observe, reader, how luckily all circumstances conspire to establish their credit. The earl of Sandwich has amongst other valuable fruits of his travels, enriched the literary world with an original state of the accounts of the temple, made by these very Amphictyons, in the 100th Olympiad. The marble was found at Athens; and Dr. Taylor has illustrated and supplied it with a great deal of learning and critical sagacity. See his Dissertation on the *Marmor Sandwicense*.

L E T T E R CXVIII.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER. From Sparta.

I have detained thee hitherto, CLEANDER, with some scattered remarks on the manners of the people I converse with, and dwelt only on the outside of things. Let us now penetrate into the recesses of their policy, and the peculiar strokes of wisdom, which distinguish it. I enter on the task of anatomizing their constitution with pleasure, as it is in further obedience to thy commands, and compliance with my own inclinations. And though, like other anatomies, it affords more trouble than entertainment in the execution; yet in the close it produces very useful matter of reflection; which might be drawn out by thy activity and address into consequences of the last importance to thy country.

One aim and intention of LYCURGUS was to preserve the commonwealth, he founded, from civil feuds. To this end he removed every internal cause of commotion, by dividing Lacedæmon into thirty thousand equal lots; and of these nine thousand are in the hands of the Spartans. The culture of them brings forth a very ample provision for the necessaries of life; and their care, thou knowest, extends not to its ornaments. The number of citizens corresponds exactly to that of the portions of land, which are never to be increased or diminished. Thus not a man in the state being more powerful than another, the legislator has left no fuel for future animosities. By means of so excellent a measure, and the exclusion of foreign commerce in the abolition of silver and gold, he has fixed the republic on the

most solid and unalterable foundation. This last law, which forbids the current use of any except iron or leather money, is conceived with the utmost art, and in the spirit of a great politician. For, besides that it hinders the introduction of those vices, that are the ordinary companions of an extensive trade, had he neglected to establish it, he would soon have found, notwithstanding his caution in the *Agrarian*, that still one door was open to sedition. Without this institution, that law must have operated ineffectually; since the balance of money being distinct from that of land, would by the increase of riches, in process of time, have exceeded it; so that an unequal distribution of property remaining, the seeds of contention would have remained with it; and whoever had raised a large personal fortune in traffic, might have been able to disturb the commonwealth by faction.

The legislator, after having prevented all occasion of tumult from within, imagined they would be able to repel any from without by their union. The Helots, however, have made several struggles for their liberty: they are a nation of slaves, (to which a number of conquered Messenians has been added some years since) and receive the most cruel usage from their masters. They are of great service in war as well as in the tillage, which is intrusted wholly to their industry. Every Spartan is attended by seven of them in the field, and they have fought sometimes so valiantly, as to have been presented with a crown of olive and their freedom by the state. Their multitudes are so considerable, as that now and then in harvest time, the youth are ordered to go out and massacre the reapers, when they are returning from their work in the evening. So infamous and savage a custom took its rise from the apprehension of an insurrection, and is thought a necessary act of policy and self-defence.

As to the magistrates of this state, they are few, because it is neither vicious nor populous. Thirty members compose the senate, which is equal to the kings in power. They are chosen by the votes of the people, not by lot; and continue in office during life, if they shew a regard to virtue and the public good; for good morals are esteemed so essential a qualification to a statesman, that if a bad citizen gives an opinion, which is generally approved of, it is entered on their journals, as the advice of some better man, and not in the name of the mover. No one is admitted into this venerable council under the age of sixty, nor unless he be distinguished for his merit, and has offered himself a candidate. They are judges in capital causes, and take much time to consider of them, because an error once made in a matter of life and death is not to be amended. They debate on every point of public business, and propose their resolutions to be confirmed by the assembly. They are accountable to none, and all the offices of the state are entrusted to them.

The kings are taken out of the two branches of HERCULES's family. They must be educated in the Spartan manner; and no small weight is laid on their bodily perfections, such as tallness and strength. For it is not long since, that the wife ARCHIDAMUS was fined in a round sum, for marrying a short wife. They told him, "his posterity would degenerate from their great ancestor." In the beginning of every month they take a solemn oath to maintain the laws. They administer the holy rites, and have a tythe of all swine, that none may be wanting for the sacrifices. They are sole judges in cases of adoption and the high-ways. A double portion is assigned them at the public meals, where they are required to attend constantly, and dine at a separate table: one of them was punished some years ago for eating at home with his queen.

A palace is appropriated to their use, and all outward marks of respect shewn them. Their powers however are very limited in times of peace; for each is subject to be tried by his brother king, the senate, and the ephori, although they are indulged in appealing to the assembly, and such points are determined only after mature deliberation. In war nothing can be more extensive than their authority. Either of them may be sent out at the head of the army, and performs all the offices of a general without controul; and though he has counsellors appointed him, it is in his own breast to follow their advice, or depart from it. The family and relations of the kings are treated with no more regard than other citizens; but the hereditary right is so secure, that notwithstanding the father suffers exile for male-administration, the punishment reaches not to the son, nor is he excluded from the succession.

The people are divided into six tribes, and distinguished by their dresses, sandals, and way of wearing their hair from all other Græcians. The great popular assembly of Laconia is composed of thirty thousand citizens, dispersed into every city and district of the country: the lesser, of the Spartans, which meets on every occasion, while the other is never called together, except on the important subject of peace or war. The place where they receive the propositions of the senate, on which they are not suffered to debate, lies between the bridge Babyca, and the river Cnacion, near the Persian trophy. They do business in the open air, and blame the Athenians for assembling in fine buildings, adorned with elegant paintings and statues, because they imagine, that the welfare of the state may often suffer from such ill placed magnificence, as it tends to captivate the senses, and distract the understanding, which ought to be better employed. Their decisions in former times differed so much from the senate, that Po-

LYDORE and THEOPOMPUS enacted an unconstitutional law, which has been since cancelled, "that whenever the people gave a wrong vote, the kings and senate should have a power of over-ruling it." The strength of the people encreased to such a degree afterwards, that the same THEOPOMPUS was forced to allow them the creation of the four Ephori, who are guardians of their interest; and though designed only at first to shield the people from the senate and the kings, have since usurped an absolute jurisdiction over all. This king was blamed by his queen for consenting to weaken the royal authority. "But, said he, it will be now more solid, and consequently more lasting." The Ephori continue but one year in place, and no man can be elected into it a second time. They superintend the treasury, judge in civil causes, execute the royal office in the absence of the kings, preside at the games and on all festivals, as well as in the assemblies of the people. They have a share too in the management of the senate, and are alone exempted from paying an external reverence to the reigning princes. The authority of recalling generals from the army, or any of the public officers, is vested in their hands, and in their dispatches to them they use the * scytalè, which is an artful manner of conveying a letter into foreign countries, without a possi-

* The nature and use of the scytalè was this; when they gave a general his commission, they took two round pieces of wood in the form of truncheons, alike in thickness and length. One they kept themselves, the other was delivered to him. So, when they had any thing to communicate to him, they cut a long narrow scrawl of parchment, and winding it about their staff, one fold close under another, they wrote their business down the sides of it. Then they took off the parchment, and sent it to the officer, who applying it to his own, which exactly resembled theirs, the folds fell in with one another, as at the writing, and the characters were read with ease. Vide Plut. in Vit. Lyf. & Aul. Gell. L. 17. C. 9.

bility of its contents being discovered, except by the proper person. In a word, they are so powerful, as to dispense rewards or punishments at their pleasure; and the state is not secure from the exercise of their tyranny, unless they are divided by jealousies. These are the chief magistrates, on whom the motions of the republic depend. And now, **CLEANDER**, pause a moment to admire the wisdom of **LYCURGUS**; for the equality of estates confines the power of the governors; and the slow rotation of honours restrain the ambition of the aspiring. These are the never failing sources of the Spartan tranquillity.

There are other inferior officers, who inspect the exercises of the youth, the manners of the women, the behaviour of the citizens in public places, and settle the prices of goods, and the weights and measures of the market.

There are others also, who are appointed to take care of strangers and ambassadors, to dismiss them at a convenient time, and to prevent the Spartans from conversing with them. The Pythii are sent to consult the oracle on all emergencies, and are permitted to dine with the kings. One of them constantly attends the senate. The Hippagretæ are three in number, and elected by the Ephori. It is their business to sit at the head of the public tables every day, and send a proper share of the meal to those, who absent themselves, at a sacrifice or a chace, the only lawful reasons of absenting. They choose out three hundred of the bravest citizens, and form them into a body, which is supplied by new ones, as any of them fall in war, or are excluded from the company, because of their age. These are they, who fought with **LEONIDAS** at Thermopylæ; and the custom of giving them precedence over the rest of the army was wisely instituted by **LYCURGUS**, as an ad-

mission into it raises great emulation among the soldiers. In a day of battle they are placed before the king in the centre. PÆDARCHUS stood as a candidate a few months since to supply a vacancy in this troop; and upon finding he was not chosen, he went out from the presence of the Ephori with much seeming gaiety, and in a fit of laughter. They called him back, and enquired the reason of it. He answered, "he could not help congratulating the state in silence, on being possessed of three hundred braver and better citizens than himself." At the last Olympic games, another Spartan being asked, whether his victory there would be of any service to him, he replied, "Yes, for it would recommend him to a station before the king in battle." The statues of the Gods are all in armour, to intimate, that the people place their confidence in military force. Their sacrifices are made with uncommon frugality; because they imagine the Deity is more moved by the sincerity than the incense of the worshipper. The only prayer they offer up at the altar is, that "they may receive good things for their good actions." They bury the dead in the city, and the tombs are placed in the precincts of the temples. All mourning ceases in eleven days. No one is allowed an inscription on his monument, except he dies in the field, in order to appropriate a kind of religious regard to the sepulchres of the valiant. The nearest relations of the slain judge from those parts of his body, where he has received his wounds, whether he deserves an honourable interment.

Their treaties of peace are engraven on stone pillars, and annually renewed by a solemn deputation sent to the contracting state. The legislator has commanded them to treat the vanquished with lenity, and to forbear plundering the dead bodies. They set so much an higher value on a victory gained by stratagem than by force, that in the former case

they sacrifice an ox to MARS, and in the latter no more than a dunghill cock. They pay little attention to fleets, which is the necessary consequence of a want of trade. For the same reason it is with difficulty they raise money for carrying on a war, though they have scarce any need of it, since every Spartan serves in the field at his own expence; and as to the troops of the allies, they are paid by their own masters. Whenever they have wealth in possession, it is preserved in their temples, or deposited with their neighbours the Arcadians.

No settled number of troops is maintained by this state, and one of their kings being interrogated about it, said, "It was no matter, they were sufficient to defeat an inferior enemy." There is something very becoming, as well as very religious, in the ceremonies they use in time of war. The king, when he is going out, sacrifices in his own family to JUPITER ἀγίτωρ, and the fire remains unextinguished on the altar till his return, when he makes an offering of the spoils to the God. Before every action he sacrifices to the Muses; then each man puts a garland on his head, combs his hair, and the trumpet sounds to the onset. In truth, no state of Greece equals this people in the art of war, for they are perpetually employed in those exercises, which are the representation of it.

Thus the Lacedæmonians are a nation of soldiers, trained up to a military life, in order to defend their own liberties, without invading the quiet of their neighbours, and to repel the unreasonable attacks of their enemies, without aiming to be lordly conquerors. So just and excellent were the purposes of LYCURGUS; but it is the misfortune of this great republic to have avoided an effeminacy, which

would be injurious to itself only, and to have indulged a lust of power, which lays waste mankind ; so that it carries its principle of mortality in the very circumstance, which has raised its glory, and constitutes its strength. The restless spirit of HERCULES is descended to the Spartans, and they can by no means content themselves with mock skirmishes, and the idle mimicry of war. Proud of their superiority in the field over the whole world, and of that vigor, which arises from health and temperance, they are desirous to prove both by their effects, however fatal.

Founded on a scheme of entire separation from the manners of other countries, in making foreign acquisitions, and giving way to their national ambition, they break through the national constitution : in setting Greece at variance with itself, they are working their own as well as the general destruction. And, by the sacred life of ARTAXERXES, (if I foresee aright) the day cannot be far distant when every people of the west, reduced to misery and weakness by the wounds of civil war, shall bend before his arm, shall adore the rising power of our eastern sun, and own the healing influence of his beams.

C.

L E T T E R CXIX.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

BY this time, CLEANDER, I am persuaded, thou considerest the republic of Lacedæmon as an heap of peculiarities; and did not the behaviour of the state itself, as well as the testimony of all Greece, unite in confirming my account, thou mightest be tempted to suspect the credit of it, and perhaps to think the whole a creature of my own imagination. To be serious, the Spartan government is so remote from the practice of the world, and so strongly declaimed against by the voice of nature, that were it not for custom, that second nature, no people upon earth would willingly conform to it. The penetrating LYCURGUS foresaw this; and from his intimate acquaintance with men and things, wisely judged it impossible to fix the form of government, which he gave his countrymen, unless he moulded their passions to his laws, and interwove an habit of cheerful obedience into their very tempers and constitution. To this end he was attentive to their education, beyond what has been recorded of the ancient Persians, and has disabled every man from enjoying the privileges of a Spartan, who has not gone through the several parts of the institution. No one is a citizen by birth, except his father and mother are of the city; and as soon as an infant is born into a fa-

mily, the elders of the tribe examine it. They determine whether it be of a tender or a vigorous make, and accordingly either expose or educate it, without reflecting, that a weak constitution often settles into a state of health; and that nature sometimes makes amends for a feeble and deformed body, by the strength and beauty of the understanding. If the child is approved, he is assigned a lot among the citizens, and pronounced capable of bearing public offices. They inure them to hardships from the first, and the children of the magistrates and of private men are clothed and nourished in the same manner. At seven years old they are put into the class of boys, and at the age of eighteen they are numbered among the Ephebi. In the mean time they are taught to go bare-foot, live entirely upon flesh, that they may have large limbs and florid countenances, and are accustomed above all to the exercise of hunting. At a certain time of the year, some of them are laid upon the altar of DIANA ORTHIA, and scourged so severely, that they have expired upon the spot. But the patience and spirit of the boys not only exceeds belief, but even the capacity of human nature in all other countries. The Goddess is said to delight in blood and cruelty; and LYCURGUS appointed annually this barbarous sacrifice at her shrine, as well to appease the vengeful temper of the Deity, as to make that shrine a monument of Spartan heroism. But does it not argue a want of sense, to suppose any being disinterestedly malevolent? Or is it so much an exercise of courage as enthusiasm, to suffer quietly the follies and the insolence of depraved religion? Exclaim then with me, CLEANDER, at the infamous scene, and shrink with horror on the very mention of such criminal and ill-natured piety.

There is another custom enjoined by law, and practised by the boys, which, though singular enough, is yet much freer from exception than the last; I mean that of stealing. As all things in the hands of private persons are considered as belonging to the state, a dexterity of this kind is so far from giving offence, that it raises the character of the person who excels in it. The boys are encouraged to it, as it habituates them to stratagem and military address; and whoever is caught in it, is punished, not for the fact, but his want of vigilance and quickness. The shocking story of him, who permitted a fox to tear out his bowels, before he would discover the theft, is too well known to be enlarged upon. They are bred up in strict reverence of the oldest citizens. It is expected, that the latter should reprove them for every fault committed in their sight, under pain of the same penalty. The younger must bear these reproofs, without resentment, and with modesty; and it is required, whenever they are seen publicly in the streets, that they should keep their eyes fixed upon the ground, and be guilty of no levity. Nor is it unusual for those in the higher classes to choose out certain youths for their favourites. The law enacts, that in such cases the Inamoratos shall suffer for the trespasses of those, whom they protect; and enjoins the rest, who are not honoured in this manner, to suppress carefully the rising of envy. When a lad has been two years among the Ephebi, he is often placed at the head of the class of boys, and conducts them in the morning to their martial exercises. In the Gymnasia, the girls contend naked with them in wrestling, dancing, boxing, and all those sports, which are assigned generally to the province of men. No Spartan is indulged in marrying any woman, except he has vanquished her at these games. It is owing to this education, so contrary to the female softness in most nations, that the

women of Lacedæmon are esteemed rough, haughty, and assuming. GORGO, the wife of LEONIDAS, was one day asked the reason, "Why the ladies of her country had so great a power over the men." "Because, answered she, "they alone produce men." 'Twas the opinion of LYCURGUS, that the inclinations of the mother have a surprising effect upon the children, as well as her arts of persuasion on the husband. So he has contrived to unite their sentiments with each other's, and the laws of the republic, by obliging them to a similitude of manners, and training them to warlike exercises. Then wonder not, that VENUS is adored in armour by this people. Every citizen must marry at the age of thirty; and whoever has contributed four children to the common stock, is discharged by law from all painful services. The married ladies wear veils, and the unmarried ones appear without any. The former are supposed to be contented with their present husband, and the latter are desirous to gain one. Virgins are wedded without a dower, and a temporary exchange of wives is allowed in the city. An old man may make over his wife to a younger, and a new bridegroom must visit his spouse by stealth. These are the odd passages in the connubial laws of Sparta.

The Ephebi are enjoined many hardships, while all who are in the class of men, are indulged in an honourable tranquillity, and exemption from those toils. Public lodgings are set apart for them; they lie down together on beds of reeds, and are taught never to give way to sleep from a love of indolence, but merely to refresh themselves, and according to the dictates of nature. They use no ointments, nor any bath but the river Eurotas. The combats of the Ephebi are extremely fierce; and no man is at liberty to own himself conquered. They are forbid to drink, unless it be to quench their thirst; and in order to force them

to sobriety, it is enacted, that in the darkeſt nights, they ſhall go home without torches. Thou mayſt obſerve, CLEANDER, to what low minutenefſes the care of LYCURGUS has deſcended, becauſe he well knew, that the manners of a ſtate in trifles are of conſequence to ſupport its ſtrength.

The Spartans eat together in common halls. Each table has a ſelect company; and no man is admitted to any one of them, without the general conſent of the members, who frequent it. This is done with a view to prevent any interruption in the converſation, and that no citizen may be uneaſy at the ſeaſons appointed for relaxation. Every man ſends in a monthly contribution for the maintenance of the entertainments; and it is expected, he ſhould come thither, without having privately feaſted at his own houſe. One inſtance of ſuch luxury, if brought to light, would be attended with infamy. They ſit down without any diſtinction of age, and are waited on by the boys, to whom they preſcribe ſilence. It is not an uncommon thing at theſe times, to put ſubtle queſtions to the youth; and, if they fail of returning a ſhort, clear, pertinent, and ready answer, they are puniſhed by the head of the claſs. After dinner, they make ſome of their ſlaves drunk, with a view to inſtil an abhorrence of that crime into their children. The inhumanity of this practice is more odious, than the deſign of it is commendable. The ordinary table talk of the Spartans is remarkably improving. Their diſcourſe turns chiefly on virtue, liberty, a contempt of other nations, their own form of government, the character of their law-giver, and the hiſtory of their great men. Theſe ſubjects are always uppermoſt in a Spartan's thoughts.

After ſo many particulars recited at large of this people, I flatter myſelf, that thy freindſhip will induce thee to be

a little inquisitive after me. Within a few days I shall enter into the class of men, as thou mayst easily guess, very highly to my comfort; and to complete me as a citizen, I am lately become a sharer in the lands of the state; for a Spartan, with whom I had contracted an intimate acquaintance, died since my return from Thebes without any relations, and left me the heir to his lot. Believe me, CLEANDER, it was with no reluctance, that I exchanged the sumptuous cookery, and the feasts of Asia, for the black broth and the sordid diet of this city. Let me confess to thee, however, that I called up all the powers of dissimulation to my help, in counterfeiting an unwilling approbation of those rough sports, in the Palestræ of their youth, where I have acted by turns the part of the victor and the vanquished. But the king's service bears down every consideration of private convenience in the breast of the faithful CRATIPPUS. And when I reflect on the labours of Lacedæmon in profound peace, I admire not at their fondness for the comparative repose of war; nor is it a virtue in those men to despise death, who lead a life, of which they have reason to be weary.

C.

L E T T E R CXX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

DURING the whole course of my busy and dangerous employment, never have I more ardently wished for the company of my old friends, the partners of my studious and speculative years, than I did this morning in the sacred grove of laurel, which leads from the temple to the brow of the hill. Thither I retired, full of the reflections, which this remarkable place must suggest; and how did I regret those charming conversations of our Bactrian solitude! Where the venerable SMERDIS would lead the inquisitive CLEANDER into the highest subjects, would hear his objections, redress his errors, direct his reasonings, and warm his heart. What new lights are thrown upon a question by those friendly debates! And, for want of such communication, how am I stopped every moment in my course of thinking, while I am tracing to their original the imposture and superstition, which bring to these altars the adoration and the wealth of all Greece!

Under these disadvantages, forgive me, gentle Mage, should I fall into mistakes, or even controvert some opinions, which prevail among our eastern sages. For never can I be persuaded, that the oracles, which we see scattered all over this land of idolatry, are under the immediate guidance of the great enemy of truth and order; that the knowledge of future events delivered there is an emanation from the impious ARIMANIUS; and that such are the

methods, by which he establishes the kingdom of error, and diverts the worship of mankind from its only true object. How hard is the supposition, that the just, the benign OROMASDES should suffer the human mind, confined and fallible as he created it, to be thus unequally attacked, thus invincibly deluded? And what a preposterous dispensation is it, that where he is adored with that purity, which reason dictates, and his own prophet has prescribed, no such divine communications are vouchsafed; while he permits the book of fate to be opened near every venerable grove and romantic fountain in Greece, for the purposes of impiety and superstition!

But we need not fear any such conclusion. OROMASDES speaks to all men by the great voice of reason and nature, and to the purer East by his sacred volume. By these ways the supreme Wisdom teaches us, what we are concerned to know; and we cannot expect to be indulged in the vain curiosity of foreseeing what cannot be prevented. Nor is ARIMANIUS to be charged with revealing those secrets. From all I could observe in this feat of divination, we are not to recur to any preternatural power. Blind devotion and artful management will explain the whole mystery; and men are deceived but by men.

As soon as one begins to ascend the sacred mountain, every thing appears adapted to inspire a religious horror. The ancient trees hanging over the rock on each side the temple, and the rock itself opening into a rude kind of semicircle, whose echoes increase the confused voices, and the sound of the trumpets, which always make part of the ceremony; the magnificence of the buildings, and the richness and elegance of the consecrated gifts, sufficient of themselves to strike the imagination, are particularly pointed out, and exaggerated by a set of men, whose business it

is to wait upon strangers; and who, I observed, endeavoured to lead them into some account of themselves, and the circumstances which brought them to consult the God.

After duly performing the various sacrifices and purifications, without which the temple is not to be approached, they are conducted thither; their head muffled up in their garments, and trumpets blowing all round them, that no sight or sound of evil omen may interrupt the procession. This indeed makes a most ridiculous appearance; and what with the solemnity, the noise, and the uneasy posture they walk in, they are quite fatigued and confounded by the time they get to the cell, where they wait with their questions in their hands. While they are in this devout expectation, they are sometimes refreshed with the most fragrant odours issuing from the inmost recesses of the temple. As this is a token of the Deity's peculiar favour, it scarce ever happens, but when some person of consequence is among the suppliants.

In the mean time water is brought to the Pythia from the Castalian fountain, and she chews the leaves of the sacred laurel, to prepare her for the prophetic office. Immediately she rushes into the sanctuary, her hair dishevelled, her colour changed, her eyes rolling, foaming at the mouth, and with all the marks of fury and distraction. She throws down the censers and the laurel branches, that stand in her way; and at last is seated upon the tripod by the attending priests, and delivers the answer of the God in a loud and hollow voice.

Thou wilt imagine, I must be attentive to so extraordinary a spectacle and every circumstance brought to my mind the tradition, they have here, about the first discovery of the prophetic cave, over which the tripod is placed.

Some goats, they tell us, browsing upon the edge, suddenly fell into a kind of madness, leaping and making strange noises. The goat-herd ran to the cave, and, looking down into it, was seized in the same manner; his features were distorted, and the tone of his voice altered, just as it happens to the Pythia, and the spirit of divination came upon him. This surely points out to us a physical solution: we know the vapours arising from different parts of the earth have very sensible effects upon the human body. There are exhalations, that cause instant death; there are caverns, that stupify for a time: and may not the Castalian fountain, running through the same soil, partake of the same qualities? May not the laurel too promote the epileptic symptoms? Such is the nature of that plant, according to the observation of HIPPOCRATES; and hence perhaps it is dedicated to APOLLO, the author of enthusiasm, and bears a principal part in all the rites of divination. There are instances, where the paroxysm has been so violent, that even the sacred ministers were terrified, and left the Pythia to herself; and not long since she died in the operation, having taken probably too strong a dose. Besides, on any other principles, what can this fury mean? Can it serve any purpose, but that of amusing and confounding the multitude? Can a mad-man see further into futurity than one in his senses? And should not the mind in its undisturbed state be fittest to converse with a superior intelligence?

How different is the disposition of the holy men, amongst whom thou residest! Abstracted indeed from the world, but not unfit for it, not heated by passion, nor sunk into melancholy, they are prepared to receive the divine influence; and if such influence, after the copious streams shed upon our great lawgiver, still descends upon the sons of men, it must be upon these his successors. The effects at least

are worthy so sublime an original. These fables are not employed in giving doubtful answers to trifling or impious questions, in encouraging a curiosity destructive both of happiness and virtue; but in one great scheme of benevolence and instruction, in correcting the mistaken, succouring the unfortunate, pointing out the great truths of morality, and leading the way to the practice of it.

Formerly the oracles were all delivered in verse; but they were generally in so bad a taste, and sometimes so lame and irregular, that as the age grew more critical, they could not be borne any longer. It was too plain an absurdity, that HOMER and HESIOD should be greater masters of the art than the God of poetry, who inspired them; and therefore he now usually speaks in prose. But to preserve the ancient form, there is a band of poets ready, who reduce the answers into measure, and may be useful also to give them sense and coherence upon occasion.

Not that sense and coherence are always thought necessary. The God adapts himself to the genius of his votaries; and to those, who admire most what they least understand, he condescends to give words without a meaning, from which they seldom fail to pick out something applicable to their wishes or their fears. A certain degree of obscurity is essential to every oracle; it becomes the dignity of the power who dispenses them; and it were profane to expose the divine secrets too plainly to the unhallowed vulgar. Thus does superstition impose upon itself, and leaves fraud and contrivance little to do. Not but in those cases, where more caution is required, the finest artifices are employed to support the credit of the temple: the way of life, the passions, the expectations, the very coun-

tenance of the consultor is attended to. Where the probability lies strongly on one side of the question, the answer inclines that way. Generally it is so adjusted, as tolerably to suit either event; and where public business is the subject, and more eyes are turned upon it, there it is particularly involved and ambiguous. The Delphic shrine, however, has the reputation of speaking plainly; and the rest of the prophetic Gods and heroes, and even APOLLO himself from his other temples, send their worshippers hither, to get their revelations farther revealed.

While I was surveying the sacred treasury, and observed almost in every room some costly offering of CROESUS, I could not but pity that unfortunate prince, whose dependance on this very oracle lost him his crown. And when a Spartan of the company was shewing me the tablet, whereon is engraved the famous answer given to LYCURGUS, I pointed to CROESUS's golden lion, and said, "See there a memorial of a different nature. The God, who gave a sanction to the constitutions of your law-giver, sent the no less devout Lydian monarch on an expedition, that ruined him; and, as he established one government, he overturned another."

The greatest number, and the most valuable of the presents were, I took notice, of the same age with those last mentioned. The multitude indeed still flocks to these altars; and the states of Greece, on every great occasion of conquest or deliverance, still dedicate a statue or erect a trophy. But the men of understanding and consequence no longer repose that trust in the decisions, from Delphi, which their ancestors used to do. The instances of influence and corruption, which these later times have

afforded, must indeed be sufficient to open their eyes, and put an end to so slavish a prejudice. The portico of Parian marble, which adorns the front of the temple, was the price of driving the Pisistratidæ out of Athens : and the story of HIPPIAS is not yet forgotten at the Persian court, who used to complain, that while the opposite faction had the care of the sacred buildings, the Spartans, who consulted the oracle, (whatever their questions were) had always the same answer returned them, "that they should restore liberty to Athens." The like interested motives prevailed upon the Pythia, Perialla, to pronounce DAMARATUS illegitimate ; and we have heard the old men of XERXES's court describe the satisfaction the exiled king expressed, when he heard at Thermopylæ, that the impious priestess was convicted and deprived. The taste, that begins to prevail all over this country for real science, and the free debates upon the great principles of nature and religion, which are held at Athens particularly, will go on to expose the imposture ; and I foresee, without consulting the God, that in the next age his prophecies will be ridiculed, and his altar deserted.

One word more, to obviate a prejudice relating to this oracle, which is spread over the east. The panic, which seized the troops of XERXES, when they came near Delphi, has been wonderfully magnified. Thunders are said to have burst from Parnassus, and stones to have rolled down its sides in defence of the holy place. The attempt upon it indeed miscarried ; but the same army plundered and burnt a sumptuous temple of the same Deity at Abæ, which, it should seem, he was equally concerned to protect.

May we, holy Mage, be content with, and make the best use of the present time; this is the method to lay in happiness for futurity. The wise and gracious OROMASDES has given us prudence and sagacity sufficient for the common events of life; and where the prospect is clouded, and out of the reach of our view, we may safely trust ourselves in those hands, from whence we came, and whither we are to return. It is ridiculous to hope for information from above upon every trifle; and a traveller through Greece must remark, that oracles are much the most frequent in Bœotia, which is by no means the country of wits or philosophers.

W.

L E T T E R CXXI.

TELEPHANES to CLEANDER. From Persepolis.

WHILE I enjoy, CLEANDER, an honourable subsistence in the court of ARTAXERXES, it would shew great ingratitude in me not to acknowledge, that the source of all my good fortune was from thee. During the short time I have been in Persia, I have borne a share in the public mourning, and lost a generous patron in MEGABYZUS. He received me with great humanity, and was pleased with the * design I had drawn for a repository of that valuable collection, which thou sentest him out of Greece. The materials were in readiness for beginning the work, if his death had not prevented it. But I was so fortunate as to be made known, through his recommendation, to the other satraps of this magnificent court, and even to the great king; and a little before MEGABYZUS's death was promoted to an employment under OTANES, superintendant of the royal palaces. The province assigned me was to carry on the ornaments of the splendid palace of Persepolis, to which improvements have been made by every succeeding prince from CYRUS, who is esteemed the founder. To pay the last respect to my excellent benefactor, I came hither in the mournful retinue, which attended his obsequies; I saw him here entombed in the *royal mount*, among the graves of the Persian monarchs. About four hundred

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* See Letter LXXXIX.

feet distance from the citadel, the same rock of black marble, on which that is situated, rises to a considerable height; and in are it cut many cells and apartments, but into them no living person ever descends, and the coffins are let down by machines from the top.

There is a state and magnificence in the structure and situation of this palace, that strikes every beholder with pleasure and amazement. It stands north-east of the city, commanding that spacious valley, through which runs the river Araxes. The rock for threescore acres appears to have been cut into form, with immense cost and toil, for the foundation of this marvellous pile. Nothing can be more stately than the double flight of stairs, which carries up to the first platform of the palace by ninety-five steps from the plain below. The steps are so commodiously contrived, and of such a breadth from one side to the other, that twelve horsemen may with great ease ride up a-breast. The ascent to the upper court is by a second flight of stairs, with a large landing half way, after the manner of the first. The sides of the rock both to the lower and upper platform are cut in a perpendicular steep, and ornamented with figures in relieve; those upon the first in a rude grotesque stile; but those upon the sides of the second, which represents a procession and sacrifice after a victory, are performed in a better taste. The citadel at the east end of the palace is encircled with three walls each rising above the other; the first sixteen cubits high, the second twice that height, and the last threescore. They are entered by seven gates of burnished brass. From the summit of this citadel there is a most extensive prospect, circumscribed only by the heavens themselves. There is not in these Asiatic buildings the same symmetry and proportion, which we so much boast of in Greece; but there is in them something more

great and stupendous, than can perhaps result from the more regular designs of art. It cannot always be said, that the workmanship surpasses the materials; and yet the labour, that has been employed in the several parts, is incredible. The buildings upon the upper platform are of Porphyry; which, notwithstanding the hardness of the stone, is inlaid in many places with a great variety of other costly marbles, representing in Mosaic, human figures, landscapes, beasts and flowers. The inner walls of the state apartments are of black marble so exquisitely polished, that they reflect every object like a steel mirror, which extremely heightens the lustre of the gold upon the freeze, cornishes, and flutings of the pillars. The famous vine in the king's bed-chamber, which spreads its branches over the royal bed, is, in my opinion, better devised than executed. The stalk and branches are of burnished gold, and the clusters of orient pearl mixed with rubies of great value. The bedstead likewise is of gold, and the footstool alone estimated at three thousand talents. The state in the presence chamber is supported with four columns of the same metal thick-set with precious stones; and the coverings are of purple embroidered with various colours.

In the bas reliefs about this palace are represented most of the civil and religious ceremonies of the Persians, and, under proper emblems, the doctrines of the Magi. I was amazed to see upon one of the walls an image of monstrous shape, with many arms, like the Briareus of the Græcian poets, till I discovered, that ARIMANIUS, the first principle of all evil, was meant by it.

There is near the entrance of the great hall a jasper tablet, twenty feet in height from the ground, inscribed with mysterious characters. The kind of writing is known to few. Some have attributed the invention of it to an eminent sage called BELTESHAZZER, who was satrap of the province of Babylon under the later Assyrian kings, and bore considerable honours, after the dissolution of the empire, in the courts of CYAXARES and CYRUS. From an Hebrew captive he was raised to a state of sovereign dignity, for his extraordinary wisdom, and uncommon endowments. It is recorded of him, that he was possessed of a spirit of divination, and exactly foretold the great revolutions, that happened in those times. His knowledge extended itself to all those sciences and arts, that tend to enlarge the mind and embellish life; and what makes me mention him with the greater fondness is this, that he not only encouraged the improvement of arts in others, but was a master in several of them, and particularly in architecture. Some strokes of his genius, I am told, appear in the plan and structure of this palace; and a considerable part of that at Susa, where he long resided, was built by him. It is a most finished design, and shews his singular good taste in building. To this BELTESHAZZER, some maintain, the peculiar simplicity of the Persian worship is owing; and ZOROASTER, they say, had never appeared as a reformer of the Magian principles, if BELTESHAZZER had not first been. The royal favour, by which he was eminently distinguished under the new monarch after the taking of Babylon, having created him the envy of the other satraps, they plotted to destroy him by obtaining a decree from CYAXARES of such a nature, as they knew the religion of the Jews, which he firmly adhered to, would inevitably oblige him to transgress. The king having

inadvertently signed the decree, could not save him without weakening his own authority; and the penalty for transgressing required, that he should be exposed to lions. The story is set forth in sculpture upon an inner wall of this palace, where the king is seated in state with the insignia of royalty; and a prisoner brought in chains before him, who by the solemnity of the proceeding appears to be a person of eminence. For on one side the throne are ranged the grandees of his court; and on the other the magi; and a select number of priests and nobles are withdrawn apart, and seem to expostulate with one another concerning the prisoner. Under these is placed a guard of six ranks of pikes, both men and arms in full proportion. With great unwillingness CYAXARES gave up his able and faithful counsellor. He was shut up in a cave of lions. But those savage animals had no power over him, and after having remained a night in this confinement, he was taken out unhurt, to the great confusion of his enemies. This confirmed the king in the opinion, which he entertained before of his sanctity, and convinced all men that BELTESHAZZER was a person peculiarly favoured by the Gods. As a memorial of this story there are, within an arch near the passage leading to the subterranean apartments, the figure of a man with long hair, to shew the eminent rank of the person, and a lion lying tamely at his feet, in sign of this miraculous escape. This is obvious enough. But more of the sculpture upon these walls is in the hieroglyphic way, altogether wrapt up in symbols. To form these symbols, they make use not only of natural animals, but chimerical and fabulous ones; as beasts with wings, and birds with four feet. These are images of the several states and empires, that are or have been. The Assyrian monarchy is figured by a winged lion with a

crown upon its head, implying the quick progress of its conquests. Thus the ram being the royal ensign of Persia, the ram's head, seen upon the pillars here with horns one higher than the other, was expressive of the Medo-Persian empire. By the combats and fierce encounters of the natural or fictitious animals are set forth the wars of different countries, and the events of those wars determining the fate of empires. There is likewise an hieroglyphic language used in the writings of the eastern sages, which bears, I am told, a strict analogy to this sculptured imagery. * * * * *Desunt cætera.*

L.

L E T T E R CXXII.

CLEANDER TO ORSAMES. From Delphi.

I thought it would be unpardonable, while I continued in the land of oracles, to neglect paying a visit at the cave of TROPHONIUS, which is attended even with a greater variety of strange circumstances than the shrine at Delphi, and differs in the mysterious terror of its ceremonies from all others in the world. On mentioning the scheme to my companions, they readily closed in with it. PROCLES and I contrived, each of us, to form a question, which we might propose, when we arrived there; and engaged old ARCHIAS to reserve one of his family-doubts for the resolution of the Demi-God. We journeyed in a few days from Delphi to Lebadea; and on one side of the town, entered a very beautiful and romantic forest, which they call the * grove of TROPHONIUS. The river Hercynna winds through it. On the side of a rising ground stands the temple, supported by brazen pillars; in the midst of it is the entrance into the prophetic cavern. We furnished ourselves with some cakes dipt in honey, and narrow ladders, according to our instructions; and proceeded in good order up the hill. Early in the morning the priests met us in their formalities at the door of a building dedicated to Good Fortune, where we were commanded to remain some hours. They asked, what were our respective difficul-

* Pausan. Boeotic.

ties ; and told us, we must make an offering to APOLLO, SATURN, JUPITER, JUNO, and CERES. Victims were brought out with all speed ; and the bowels being inspected, it was declared the Deity would be favourable ; and then we were invited to make a repast out of the leavings of the altar. I took the freedom to enquire, if any other rites must be performed, before we were permitted to descend. The holy men, who waited on us, looked at me with such indignation, that I began to find I had made a false step. One of them immediately entered into so large a detail of lustrations and expiations, which were necessary for past offences, that I would have given a thousand Darics to have been that moment sacrificing a Bactrian ox in the Mithriac cell, rather than that this idle curiosity should have drawn me into a perplexing farce, so inconsistent with the genius of true religion. At the close of the evening, we were informed, it was time to break off our divine meditations, and walk down to the river, conducted by two boys about thirteen years of age. In the mean time the priests busied themselves in offering a ram to AGAMEDES, on whose auspicious aspect depends the ratification of the former omens. As we were undressing to bathe, PROCLES, with his usual vivacity, whispered me, that "he was amazed how one consultor of an oracle could look upon another without laughing." That ceremony ended, two doses of water were administered to each of us ; the one called Lethè, to drown the remembrance of those things which so lately were the greatest part of our concerns ; and the other Mnemosynè, to make us retain the memory of whatever was to be exhibited in our descent. No body but ARCHIAS could bear these draughts with a pious resignation. My head was so intoxicated with them, that I was in a fit condition to receive every thing the priests should tell me, and to enter the cave

with a religious kind of horror. After an obeisance or two to a fine statue of DÆDALUS's workmanship, we were arrayed in linen habits adorned with ribbons, and the venerable Theban stepped forward to the mouth of the cave. He was rolled into it, and continued there for an hour. When he came out, (which was with his feet foremost,) the natural gravity of my friend's face seemed heightened into an inflexible dulness. He was presently conveyed to the seat of Mnemosynè, and having related what he had seen and heard very confusedly, he was conducted into the temple of Good Fortune, where he was advised to stay, till he should be restored to his former senses. PROCLES and I were so astonished at this appearance, that I believe the terror of entering into the cell made an alteration in our looks, almost equal to that, which might be expected on returning from it. However, it was too late to withdraw. PROCLES went through all the forms in the same manner with ARCHIAS; and when he rose again above ground, he was no more the lively, the humorous companion I had conversed with; every laughing feature was struck out of his countenance. My turn being next, though I knew the whole to be an impudent imposture, yet it occurred to me, there must be somewhat contagious in it, since PROCLES had the same sentiments; and, if it had been possible, the good sense of the man would have saved him from this extraordinary stupefaction. In great anxiety therefore I desired leave to speak with my acquaintance, that had gone through the operation, but was hurried into the cave without a moment's pause. When I fell down, I was beset on the sudden with a mist, and not having understanding enough to be certain, whether I was awake or in a dream, conjecture, that I received a blow upon the head, which stunned me. Soon after I fan-

cied, that † I saw an immense gap resembling an hollowed sphere. It had a darkness, not still, but thick and agitated. I shook at the dreadful noises of beasts, and groans of men and women, that issued from an unfathomable depth. At last all was hushed, and a small voice pronounced some obscure words, by way of answer to my interrogatories, that are not worthy to be blotted on my paper. As soon as the voice ceased, I was dragged out of the cell, passed a severe examination, and having refreshed myself in the temple, we, the next morning at break of day, took our leave of TROPHONIUS and his priests.

In my way back to Delphi, I made a vow by the hallowed groves of our prophet, that I would not again torture my imagination to find questions for an oracle, convinced more than ever, that a man's own sagacity is the only Dæmon to be trusted in real difficulties.

Whence it proceeds, ORSAMES, I cannot tell, but there is something in darkness, that calls up the fears, and disturbs the cheerfulness of human nature. For which reason, I am often offended at those, who represent a secret grot, or a gloomy cavern, as the immediate place of his presence, whose most perfect emblem is the radiant MITHRAS, exposed for ever in the glorious concave of the heavens, to engage the eyes and worship of the rational part of his creation.

C.

† See Plut. p. 500. Vol. II. Par. 1624. In his Treatise of SOCRATES'S Dæmon, where one TIMARCHUS, desirous to be instructed in the nature of it, is said to have visited TROPHONIUS, and seen an allegorical vision, which is related and explained at large.

L E T T E R CXXIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS chief scribe.

I no sooner received information, that the plague, which has raged the whole summer at Athens with great violence, was considerably abated, than I determined to set out on my return thither; and as the roads at that season of the year are much infested with parties of soldiers both of the Peloponnesian and Athenian allies; I took hold of an opportunity, which fortune threw in my way, to join the train of CALLIAS and NAUSICLES, the Athenian deputies to the assembly of the Amphictyons, who were preparing for their journey home at the same time with myself. I experienced the good effects of travelling under their protection; for upon the borders of the territories of Attica, we fell in with a party of Boeotian light horse, who were scouring the country: the deputies immediately sent to acquaint the commanding officer with their character, which by the law of nations, and the general practice of the Greeks, was sufficient to secure them, and their retinue, from any arrest or vexation in their passage. The officer behaved with great politeness on this occasion, and prevented by his authority the violence, with which the rough soldiers, greedy of spoil, were preparing to lay us under contribution. The rest of our journey passed without any remarkable incident. The morning after our arrival CALLIAS and NAUSICLES made a report, in the first senate

and afterwards before the assembly of the people, of their behaviour in the Amphictyonic council, as representatives of the commonwealth of Athens. They gave in the roll of contributions, which were laid upon all the Græcian states for the enlargements and repairs of the temple of Delphi, and the particular sum, which Athens was obliged to furnish towards her part in carrying on so pious a work. They related a speech made by the deputies of Corinth against the Athenians, for erecting a chapel in the temple of Delphi, in memory of the battle near Naupactus; which concluded with a motion, that a fine should be set upon them by the Amphictyons, for the celebrating victories of the Greeks over each other, in the same place, where their conquests over Barbarians alone were consecrated to posterity. But NAUSICLES exerted himself with such activity in opposition to it, by shewing, amongst other things, that the Athenians had done nothing unprecedented, but only followed the example of the Bœotians, who erected statues in the same temple, after the defeat of the Athenians at Tanagra, that the Corinthians were forced to drop their motion. When the report was finished, the people unanimously approved what had been done in their name by CALLIAS and NAUSICLES, and likewise decreed them crowns of gold, for their vindication of Athens against the unjust aspersions of the Corinthians. Their embassy expired with the usual compliment of being invited to a public entertainment in the Prytanæum.

The plague is by this time entirely ceased; and indeed it abated gradually with the heats of the summer. I asked HIPPOCRATES, what number he thought it had destroyed; he told me, by the most exact computation he could make, it had carried off no less than four thousand four hundred citizens (not to mention strangers)

amongst whom the order of the Hippeis had lost three hundred for their share. So terrible a depopulation, one should think, noble scribe, would inspire this state with humble and moderate sentiments, and a desire of restoring the tranquillity of Greece. But this is so far from being the case, that their spirits are more raised than ever, by a relation sent hither by DEMOSTHENES of a defeat, which the Acarnanians and Argives, under his conduct, have given to the Ambracians and Peloponnesians under that of EURYLOCHUS.

The Ambracians having entered Acarnania with eight thousand heavy armed foot, took possession of a fort called Olpis, which is built on the top of a hill not far from the sea. There EURYLOCHUS joined them with a body of Peloponnesians, who, by marching through by-ways, escaped the vigilance of some Acarnanian troops, that lay in wait to intercept them. A few days after this junction, a squadron of twenty Athenian ships appeared in the gulph of Ambracia, and DEMOSTHENES with an army of Acarnanians and Argives, (to whom were added three hundred Messenians and sixty Athenian archers) came up, and pitched his camp in sight of the enemy. The two armies remained quiet two days, but early on the 16th began an engagement, that lasted till evening. DEMOSTHENES with great judgment foreseeing where the stress of the action must lie, placed four hundred Peltastai or Targetiers in a hollow way covered with bushes, which extended itself along the flank of his right wing. The enemy's left making a motion to surround him, met with a vigorous resistance in front, and was charged at the same time so briskly in the rear by the ambuscade, that, after a short dispute, they threw down their arms, and fled. EURYLOCHUS himself was killed in endeavouring to rally his men. In

another part of the field the enemy's right wing, composed chiefly of Ambracians, who are reckoned the most warlike people in those parts, broke the left of DEMOSTHENES, and pushed it to the walls of Argos; but returning in disorder from the pursuit, the Athenian general advanced against them with his victorious troops, and obliged them to take refuge within the walls of Olpis. The next morning MENEDATUS, who succeeded EURYLOCHUS in the command, proposed to DEMOSTHENES to surrender the fortress, upon condition, that he should be permitted to retire with the Peloponnesian forces only; which the latter consented to, with a view of rendering the Lacedæmonians odious amongst their allies for deserting the Ambracians. DEMOSTHENES, after setting up a trophy, and burying his dead, decamped with his army, to oppose the remainder of the Ambracian forces, who, he had received intelligence, were marching to the assistance of their countrymen. He found them engaged in the streights of Idomene, where his superior skill in the art of war, and a perfect knowledge of the country, enabled him to gain a complete victory. For having sent a detachment to seize the passages of the mountains, he marched with the rest along the great road, and beat up the Ambracian quarters so suddenly, that the outguards made but very little resistance; the rest were soon routed, and a miserable slaughter made of them. Those, who attempted to escape, were killed or taken by the Acarnanian parties, who had beset the ways. Others, rather than surrender to their worst enemies, chose to cast themselves into the sea, and swim for safety to the Athenian ships, which were cruising on that coast. In short, on this occasion the republic of Athens has acquired great glory. Her general (who in token of his victories has sent hither two hundred suits of armour) recovered his reputation; and the Ambracians received irreparable damages. DEMOSTHENES adds in his letters, that this

success might be attended with greater advantages; but that the Acarnanians, preferring their old neighbourhood to that of an Athenian colony, are on the point of concluding an accommodation with the Ambracians, at which this state is with good reason dissatisfied.

Thou mayst imagine, potent lord, I was not a little surprized at the arrival of ZOPYRUS here from Ephesus in a Phœnician ship. What inducement he has had to seek the Athenian protection, after quitting the Persian court in so abrupt a manner, I am unable to discover; but in his daily conversation, he throws off every mark of duty and allegiance to his sovereign, by setting forth the facility of seizing some advantageous port in the Persian dominions, and proffering his service to conduct a colony of Athenians to any, which it may be thought proper to make an attempt upon. From the opinion, which the better sort of citizens have formed of his character, and their unwillingness to entangle themselves in disputes with the great king at a juncture, when the war now on foot demands their whole attention, I should conjecture, that this republic will enter into none of his projects. But whether the hopes of gain may not allure private adventurers to embark with him in some desperate enterprize, I shall not pretend to determine. However thou mayst depend on the earliest notice of his motions; and I think PYTHON should be talked to on this subject. That minister sent hither pretty early information of the army and fleet preparing in the Persian provinces; and by the decrees passed in the assembly before my return from Delphi, he will be furnished with sufficient materials for a conference. I am well assured, that the senate have taken great alarm at some secret advices from their emissaries in Thebes and Sparta. Some of the principal members, with whom I converse, intimate their suspicions, that

the Lacedæmonians will not be so scrupulous as themselves, about giving up the Greek cities in Asia, because the Ionian colonies are related to the Athenians by extraction. And indeed as the Persian ministry have in all their negotiations laid great stress on this point, an alliance with Lacedæmon would be the most desirable measure. At the same time, whatever views they may have about extending the commerce of the empire, and rendering the islands in the Ægean sea dependent upon the monarch of Asia, will be best answered by weakening the naval strength of the Athenians.

The elections for magistrates were over as usual on the 1st of the month Hecatombæon; they have gone chiefly in CLEON's favour. Thou wilt perceive by a list of them, which I send enclosed, that PHILOCRATES is chosen first Archon, and CLEON, NIQUIAS, EURYMEDON, SOPHOCLES, and four others, generals for the year ensuing. The two last of those above-named are going with a fleet of forty ships to the relief of the Corcyreans, whose exiles have lately fortified themselves in the mountains, and lay waste the country with fire and sword.

Noble scribe, if my nephew CHARICLES of Ephesus, who will deliver this dispatch into thy hands, should find favour in thy sight, I shall reckon it the greatest happiness that can befall him. He is a young man of prudence, activity and address; whom thou wilt find not unintelligent in the affairs of Greece, and extremely desirous to be ranked amongst thy dependents. Less than this I could not say of him, because of his real merit; and were I to add more, his near relation to me might appear to have blinded my judgment in his favour.

From Athens.

P.

L E T T E R CXXIV.

CLEANDER to BAGOAS, chief eunuch in the Palace of
ARTAXERXES.

THOU, who hast spent thy life within walls, where resides perpetual tranquillity, and none but the softer passions are allowed to enter, wouldst be but little entertained by a long detail of a puzzling treaty, or the view of a bloody field, where the lives of thousands have been sacrificed to the ambition of their leaders. But thou wilt hear with pleasure of the success of my negotiations in the traffic of beauty, and the fair victims I have collected from every quarter of Greece, for the Fane of Love, where thou presidest. In my late journies over this country I have still been attentive to thy commission; and I will venture to affirm, that I have now embarked for Ephesus thirty as accomplished virgins, as ever adorned the inner chambers of the palace. How will thy wrinkles, venerable eunuch, soften into a smile, when thou receivest them from their covered chariots at the secret gate? Amongst the orange trees upon the steps of the marble fountain, thou wilt examine with taste their different charms; and, after a strict examination, rank them in their several orders. Happy old man! who cool and unconcerned canst leisurely throw thy eyes over such enchanting forms, and feel only the quiet joy of administering to the pleasures of thy master.

Thou wilt easily distinguish the Ionian beauties from their graceful movements in the dance, and their submitting with less reluctance to thy curious regards. The more shy Athenians will please thee by the peculiar sweetness of their accent, and the masterly manner in which they touch the lyre. But the blooming islanders, the daughters of CHIOS and LESBOS, will strike thee most by the symmetry of their features, their long flowing tresses, their large black eyes, and the elegant magnificence of their dress.

To contrast these, there are three more northern beauties from the banks of Strymon, with fair complexions and golden hair. There is one thou must look upon as a curiosity; a Spartan, daughter of one of the Ephori, whom my friend, the Trierarch PHILOCLES, carried off in a descent upon the coast of Peloponnesus. CHELONIS expresses all the haughtiness of her country, and her quality, in her countenance; accompanied with a manly kind of beauty, which, though it commands respect, by no means excludes love.

The tender LEONTIUM I must recommend to thy peculiar care, and beg thou wilt present her in my name to the chamberlain HYDASPES. He, who shews so elegant a taste in his gardens, his furniture, and his amusements, is no less refined in his more secret pleasures; nor will refuse to accept this token of my gratitude so well suited to his delicacy. The ingenuous sweetness of her countenance, and the nobleness of her demeanour, prove her to be what her story pretends she is. The pirate of Scyros, who sold her, and had brought her up, assured me, that when he took her in a cruize off Eubœa, she was wrapped up in a rich mantle, and wore a bracelet set with gems; but he could learn no particulars relating to her, because the nurse, and the rest of her attendants, perished in the engagement.

Conscious of the state she is fallen from, she retains an air of melancholy, which my friend's humanity is so fitted, and will be so pleased to dispel.

The twenty slaves, whom I have chosen to attend these virgins, are well versed in the various arts so much esteemed in the palace of the queens. Some form an agreeable concert on all kinds of instruments; others are skilful at the loom, and trace out the most beautiful patterns for the richest embroidery. Others prepare perfumes, and are practised to attend at the bath. The three Corinthians I purchased out of the house of the most magnificent courtesan in that city. They are taught all the niceties of dress, to braid the hair, to adjust the robe, to tie the sandal, and know all those curious secrets which heighten or preserve beauty.

Give me leave to be a little vain upon my having thus added to the number of thy fair subjects. Happy subjects! under such a guardian; removed from the dangers to which helpless beauty is exposed, from the perplexing cares of life, the tumultuous sallies of ungoverned love, and the raging passions of disagreeing rivals, they are placed in the awful sanctuary of innocence and purity, where the profane cannot enter; they enjoy all the delights of a well ordered magnificence. Awed by thy discipline, made easy by thy gentleness, their minds are ever serene and chearful; their affections ever tempered and regulated; their power of pleasing is directed to one object; their ideas of happiness, all their transports, center in one lord. When instructed by thy lessons, and purified with *oil of myrrh and sweet odours, they approach his bed, how are their hearts elated to meet the embraces of a monarch, who can reward their atten-

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* Vide *Esther*, cap. iii.

tion to please him with the revenues of a province ! But the fortunate fair, in whom the king delights, who is again summoned from the second house of the women, partakes the highest honours, that a mortal can receive ; the bonds of captivity fall instantly from her hands, and the imperial tiara encircles her head. Adieu.

P. and W.

From Athens the 17th of Mæmacterion.

L E T T E R C X X V .

GOBRYAS chief scribe, &c. to CLEANDER at Athens.
From Susa.

THOU takest the surest way to silence the calumnies of thy enemies, by continuing to discharge the duties of thy employment to the entire satisfaction of those, who wish thee well ; and hast given the king and supreme council fresh proofs of thy sufficiency in business, by the variety and importance of thy Delphic dispatches.

The domestic tranquillity, which we enjoy at present, the good order established through the several provinces of the empire, and the flourishing condition of our troops and finances, give us leisure to look abroad, and survey the posture of affairs in foreign nations. The king, we hope will soon be able to determine, from the negotiations now carrying on, to which side of the contending Græcian states the influence of his arms must be carried. And how near matters draw towards a conclusion, thou wilt be better able to judge, when I have related to thee the result of

some conferences between myself and PYTHON, and the advices lately sent by CRATIPPUS from Sparta. Not many days ago, PYTHON made me a visit, and told me, that his republic having received information, that a large body of forces was to assemble early in the spring near Sardis, had sent him express orders to obtain a categorical answer from the ministers, as to their destination; since the people of Athens had reason to apprehend, that they were designed against the Græcian colonies in Asia, which by CIMON's treaty were rendered independent of Persia. I replied, that the king, my master, from his regard and observance of treaties, particularly of one so disadvantageous to himself, for a course of many years, had not deserved, without strong grounds, to be suspected of an intention to violate them: that I could not help thinking this peremptory demand was started a little unseasonably: and that it looked very much as if his state sought occasions for a rupture, by forcing a disagreeable answer from the king. That I would, however, assure him, that these troops, which were not numerous enough to give umbrage to the Athenians, were not designed, either against them or any of their allies, unless by their behaviour they obliged the king, against his inclination, to commence hostilities. PYTHON did not seem satisfied with this answer; and, amongst other objections to it, said, it was plain the empire was preparing some great stroke, as it was well known, that, besides this army at land, a powerful fleet was equipping in the ports of Phœnicia. I replied, with an appearing warmth, that it was true a squadron was fitting out to protect the commerce of our trading subjects, which was miserably disturbed and interrupted by the Peloponnesian and Athenian navies: that daily representations were made to the ministers from the most eminent merchants, that their vessels were stopped and searched, the effects seized, and even the men imprisoned, by the

ships of war belonging to both parties, under pretence, that they were carrying arms and provision to their enemies. I assured him the king could no longer suffer these violences, but would think himself unworthy the crown he wore, if he did not protect the properties and persons of his subjects, and insist upon ample reparation of the damages they sustained.

PYTHON desired me to consider, that these were inconveniences unavoidably attending neutral powers in a state of war; that many of the insolences complained of are committed for the sake of gain by particular officers, without the consent or even knowledge of their principals; and that if I would give him a list of the sufferers, and an estimate of their losses, he was sure the Athenians would give satisfaction to those, who were unjustly oppressed. He added, that he was concerned to find me more disposed to inflame than accommodate matters between our masters; and that it was purely to avoid it, he had omitted making complaint, as he was ordered, that the Persian vessels frequented the seas between the Cyanian and Chelidonian islands, in direct violation of the tenth article of CIMON's peace. I told him it was probable, the merchant ships might take that course in their voyages; but that was not contrary to the treaty, which only says, that the Persians should not sail in those seas *ὄν μαχητικῶν*, "with ships of war." After some altercation between us on the manner in which this article was complied with, he represented one while, that the Greeks would make it a common cause, if the two fundamental stipulations in CIMON's peace (the independence of the Asiatic colonies, and the restraint on our navigation) were broken through; at another time, that the Athenians, provided they could gain the good will of the king of Persia, would soften the rigour of them. But at last he said plainly,

that the commonwealth of Athens hoped we would not take part in the differences between them and the Lacedæmonians, as not being at all interested therein; but if we were resolved to interfere, they had as good pretensions to our friendship as any other Græcian state. I said, if the Athenians had any overtures to make, they might send an embassy to propose them in express terms; but that talking in general of the regard and esteem which his republic had for the king, without entering upon particulars, tended only to amuse and create distrust. As PYTHON had nothing more to offer, our conference ended; and I easily perceived his chief intent was to sound our designs, and by throwing out some softening hints of the amicable disposition of Athens, prevent any immediate resolution to break with them.

NICANDER still preserves that roughness and singularity in his behaviour, with which he began his embassy. He scarce ever stirs out of his house, makes no acquaintance in the court, and seldom confers with me. CRATIPPUS writes me word, that his own state is so ill satisfied with the dry uninforming dispatches they receive from him, that they intend to supply his place, toward the beginning of next spring, with some abler ministers, who will have it in charge to propose to us terms of the highest advantage, in exchange for our friendship. It seems they repent the abrupt manner, in which the negotiation was broke off last year; and STHENELAIDAS the Ephorus, the great promoter of the war, and the present director of their counsels, has most heartily declared himself for calling in our assistance, rather than fail in the main point of reducing the power of Athens.

I have endeavoured to trace out the unaccountable flight of ZOPYRUS, and find by intercepted letters, and other in-

telligence, that after making the best of his way to Ephesus, he took shipping there ; and it is not yet known, whither he directed his course. If, as we have reason to suspect, he conclude his ramble at Athens, I know thou wilt be vigilant in examining his conduct and designs, and acquainting us with the encouragement he receives : not that we apprehend any danger, either from his interest at home, or address abroad ; but in such cases precaution is always useful.

I congratulate thee, **CLEANDER**, that thou clovest the year in quiet and safety, which, by the cabals of thy enemies, threatened thee at its setting out with the storms of faction. If to be honoured with the favour of the prince, confirmed in the esteem of the ministers, and supported by the zealous endeavours of friends, are the proper incitements of industry and rewards of merit, thy situation is of all others the most fortunate. Farewel.

P.

L E T T E R CXXVI.

CLEANDER TO HYDASPES.

SOME of my friends here, a few days ago, accidentally fell into a dispute about the comparative excellence of the two sexes. It was occasioned by one, who ventured to call in question that natural title to superiority, which we had all along in so peremptory a manner claimed to ourselves. He maintained, that there was no distinction of sexes in the soul; that in both it was equally capable of improvement; and that the visible pre-eminence on our side was entirely to be resolved into the greater degree of care and culture, that had been bestowed upon us. He made some doubt, whether the other sex were naturally, and before the acquired softness, which they had derived from education, less able to undergo the more hardy and laborious employments, which are now appropriated to us under the name of manly. However, added he, intellectual capacity has plainly no sort of dependance upon the vigour and weakness of the animal constitution, since in our sex the greatest strength of understanding is often to be observed in bodies of the most tender and delicate make. But as example and experience may be supposed to have much more weight in this matter, than any kind of abstract reasoning, he supported his opinion by the instance of the celebrated ASPASIA; a woman, whose attainments in the whole circle of sciences have exceeded the most improved geniuses in an age and country, which think they have

made the greatest advancement in knowledge of any other. As she is yet alive in this city, though age has taken off the bloom of her person, and the death of PERICLES diminished her interest in it, it may not perhaps be a disagreeable entertainment to acquaint thee with some of the more distinguishing parts of her character, and inform thee of such remarkable circumstances relating to her, as conversation with herself or others may have helped me to the knowledge of.

ASPASIA is a native of Miletus, more famous than any other city of Ionia, for the number of extraordinary persons it has produced. This doubtless cannot so probably be accounted for from any efficacy of the climate, as from the assistance education may bestow, or the encouragement that arts may receive in one place above another. Her quality I find not altogether settled; many of her own sex dwell with some pleasure on the supposed obscurity of her birth, as a circumstance, that throws something of a shade over the lustre of her character; and speak with more certainty, than perhaps they ought, of the lowness of her descent, to take her down from that envied height of greatness, to which her virtues have raised her above the rest of her contemporaries. Nor is it agreed, what was the chief motive of her coming to Athens: some suggest, that this was the most likely place for her advancement, as a theatre, on which her literary qualities might be displayed with the most success. But the same reason might probably draw her hither, which has drawn so many others of any curiosity or ambition to excel in knowledge, the desire of improving herself in a place of the most allowed reputation for learning. However, all agree to speak of her, as one, in whom are united the highest endowments of mind and body; the utmost brightness of parts, and beauty of person; the one heightened and recommended by all that ease and

grace, which travel and acquaintance with the best company bestow; the other improved by a careful use of all those advantages, which a free converse with all the celebrated wits of Greece could give her. Her thoughts were not confined within the narrow province of domestic business, nor laid out in acquiring those more showy and superficial accomplishments, which too often engage the whole attention of that sex. She had gained an early acquaintance with every part of useful literature; but her favourite studies, to which she had devoted more care and pains, were philosophy and politics. ANAXAGORAS, one of the first credit for his attainments in natural knowledge was not esteemed superior to her in that one point, to which the chief enquiries of a whole life had been directed; and the ablest statesmen in Athens do not better understand the constitution of the several cities of Greece, or more readily discern those nice conjunctures and dependencies, which make up their respective interests. She is supposed to have imitated the manner, and in some measure to have formed herself upon the pattern of TRAGELIA, her country-woman; one of great art and intrigue, who by her abilities and address had insinuated herself into the confidence of many leading men in Greece, learnt their sentiments in public matters, and by disposing many of them by degrees to think more favourably of the designs of the great king, attached them at length to his service. But of all her high qualities, what could not fail of recommending her to the greatest notice and favour under such a government, is her admirable eloquence, and absolute command over the opinions and affections of the hearers. No wonder, that one of so uncommon a capacity should draw after her numbers of such an inquisitive nation, to hear her lessons of morality, and to be witnesses of her power of persuasion! But is it not wonderful, HYDASPES! that she, who so perfectly knows, and can so ad-

mirably explain the excellence of virtue, should be so little influenced by it, as she is represented to have been in her own conduct? That she, who had so entire an ascendancy over the passions of others, should be so far wanting in regulating her own? Some of the most considerable persons here do not, however, disdain to pay her a constant attendance, for the sake of their own improvement; and nothing sure can give one a more exalted idea of ASPASIA's accomplishments, than that SOCRATES, the most rational of the Græcian philosophers, and scarce inferior to our renowned ZERDUSHT, can learn from her new maxims of wisdom; than that PERICLES, the ablest speaker, and most consummate statesman, should apply to her to be further improved in the arts of eloquence, and more perfectly instructed in the interests of Athens. These qualifications gained so far by degrees on the affections of PERICLES, as to give great disturbance to his wife, a woman of some rank and spirit. They agreed therefore to part, that each might be at liberty to make a second choice; for the severer laws of Athens allow not our sex to follow the freer practice that prevails in Persia, and to assert the privilege of a plurality of wives, which is uncontested through all the countries of the east. He was married to her immediately after this separation; and many instances are remembered of the extraordinary love, which he always expressed for her. She had the address constantly to maintain the influence she had over him, but (as it was said) not the honour to make use of it on such occasions only, as were advantageous to his character, or serviceable to his country. I know many persons are of opinion, but, I believe, without the least foundation, that he was prevailed on by her to engage Athens in a war, in which its interests were no way concerned, in favour of the Milesians against the people of Samos. It is certain, that she attended him hither, and

erected some public monuments in memory of his conquests; and it is supposed (but ridiculously) that she had a share in that celebrated harangue, made in honour of such Athenians, as were slain in the first year of the war.

But PERICLES was soon after obliged, not only to exert all the powers of his eloquence, but to try the last efforts of his interest and importunity with the judges in her favour, when, upon the complaint of HERMIPPUS, she was publicly accused of impiety, and leading a debauched and dissolute life, by ministering to the pleasures of the young Athenians. The former part of the charge at Athens is by no means, I think, the worst imputation upon her character; since the explication of natural appearances has been understood here to imply a disbelief of the Deity, and it has been dangerous to assert, that the sun, the throne and residence of the radiant MITHRAS, is a mass of fire no bigger than Peloponnesus.

Aspersions are sometimes cast upon ASPASIA's character as one, whose soul is, they pretend, of too elevated a kind to stoop to the common concerns of household affairs, and who has too extensive views, to shew any regard to matters of so confined and inferior a nature. But these are the suspicions of such, who speak rather from general observation, than any particular knowledge of ASPASIA. Many, who know her, affirm, that her great capacity for public business does not hinder her paying a proper attention to the private duties of domestic life; nor her skill in the movements of the planetary system give any interruption to the good order and œconomy of her own family.

After the death of PERICLES she married LYSICLES, one of mean parts and parentage. Though this circumstance of her life gives one no very admirable idea of her temper or character, yet it will help to shew thee, what uncommon address and incredible dexterity she is mistress of. For her new husband, though neither recommended by the dignity of his birth, nor his talents for business, though not supported by the splendour of his fortune, or the interest of his friends, is advanced, by her sole credit and contrivance, to the highest offices and honours in the state. Adieu.

G.

L E T T E R CXXVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

I send thee, noble scribe, what thou wilt permit me to call a very valuable present, because I am sure thy wisdom will esteem it such. It is no less than a transcript of the laws of SOLON. They have been so universally celebrated over Europe, that not many years ago, a certain city on the banks of Tiber scarce known in these polished parts of the world, sent solemn deputies to Athens, who were indulged in copying them, and carried home the precious charge in triumph to their countrymen. This distinction was justly due to their pre-eminence over those of all other states; nor can any thing raise in thee an higher veneration for them, except thou listenest to what the Athenians themselves pretend, that the world owes to Attica the invention of laws. So absurd an assertion is equally ridiculous with that concerning their own original from the soil they dwell upon, as it supposes, that legal justice and subordination were not dictated to all men, by the common voice of nature, and condition of society. Both traditions arose from the same principle of vanity, perhaps too in the same barbarous age of superstition; and operate in the same manner on a credulous and proud people. This, however, is an idle speculation, and affects not the merit of the Athenian pandect; for I am convinced, a better than theirs was never formed, for the propaga-

tion of personal virtue, and the establishment of a popular religion; nor can any more effectually promote the various, yet connected interests of *liberty* and *commerce*, those main pillars of national felicity. One piece of policy will please thee, among many instances, which thou wilt observe of it in their statutes; I mean the brevity prevailing in the forms of drawing them, and the forbearing to recite the motives, that produced each of them. The former leaves no room for evasion or obscurity; the latter prevents litigiousness, because every reason expressed by the legislator is the foundation of many suits, and all men choose to obey the laws upon their own reasons.

If any institution seems blameable, it is that which makes ingratitude a legal crime. I know it has afforded a fair field of panegyric to the flatterers of Athens, as well for its singularity, as the sanction it receives from private conscience; but to me it has always appeared either wholly unnecessary, or attended with inconveniences. It is unnecessary, because we must acknowledge it enough, (if we consider it) that the generality of legislators endeavour to restrain us from violations of right; and as to every thing that concerns the duties of humanity, send every man to his own breast for information. He, who is acquainted with those actions, which procure reputation or disgrace, knows the natural infamy accompanying the ungrateful. He knows, that such an one must feel the pangs of remorse, and the vapours of solitude: he knows too, that such characters are rarely found; for if providence has made not only our reason, but our weaknesses, prompt us in many cases to a beneficence almost disinterested, then certainly much to more gratitude.

These indeed are the natural functions of this amiable virtue, and, one would think, of sufficient force to secure us from any violations of it. But should it be suggested that such violations occur sometimes in society, I grant that they sometimes occur, and, I believe, could maintain, that they are provided against incidentally by the laws of all states; for they are often so interwoven with crimes of injustice, as at once to aggravate both the crime and the penalty. So far then in every country, as they are understood to be aggravations of injustice, they are the objects of the magistrates care. As to acts of unmixed and downright ingratitude, they seldom happen; and, whenever they do, must be left for punishment to the hatred of mankind, the reproofs of reason, the torments of conscience, and the sanctions of religion. The civil magistrate ought not to interpose, because while they do not immediately affect the peace or rights of society, his interposition would bring on a thousand inconveniences. No court of judicature can with such propriety define the proportion of one benefit to another, as they can compare the nature of contested claims. Those proportions would be rated differently in the forum of justice, and the forum of conscience; for if justice restores to every man no more than his due, and gratitude often exceeds the real value of a favour in the return it makes for it; then, upon the principles of justice, no magistrate could oblige me to over-pay a benefit, though upon the principles of gratitude I should think myself frequently obliged to do so. And if it be said, that in cases, which relate to either, the magistrate must decide according to the rules of each; yet the intention of the legislator most certainly was, that points of gratitude should be determined according to the rules of justice; since, on the contrary supposition, the

doing a slight favour to another might be used as an artful way of extorting a return for it, much greater than its value. So that if the magistrate is willing to avoid various ill consequences, which would flow from a different method of determination, he must consider cases of gratitude in the light of pecuniary debts. For which reason the jurisdiction of the magistrate, as to such cases, must operate imperfectly. The proceedings of the forum of conscience and of justice most evidently interfere, and no attempt should be made to unite them. The principles of justice would be forgot, if those of gratitude were always observed; and the very *nature* of gratitude would be destroyed, if weighed by the rules, as its *grace* would be lost, if it were enforced by the penalties of justice. Such a law then sounds prettily in the words, yet, when examined, is nothing but sound. It tends to make the intercourse of benefits among friends as mercenary, as the exchange of commodities in the dealings of merchants. It sets men on their guard against each other; and gives them a reserve in accepting kindnesses, lest they should be called upon by law to return them, and therefore undermines the principle it was intended to support. Excellent minister, thou wilt forgive the peculiarity of my sentiments; I know they are inconsistent with a law established in Persia, and a law in *Ægypt*; but, if I mistake not, they are deducible both from the reasonings of speculative philosophers, and the practice of wise legislators.

The Athenians are commendable for not confining the judges in their determinations to the strict letter of the law. In all states the extremities of too much law, and too little, are to be equally avoided. Discretion and fixed law should be mingled together; the former to provide against particular cases, that may arise and

could not be foreseen: the latter to be a general rule of action: the one may moderate or add to the rigour of the law; the other prevents ignorance, disobedience, fickleness in the people; in the judges, it prevents favour, hatred, or corruption. For in order to deter the magistrate from bending the law in such a way as to break it, I am content the magistrate should be in the power of the law, while a discretionary power is vested in the magistrate. And should it be objected, that the situation of the magistrate would be dangerous and precarious, if he were liable to be called to an account for the exercise of this discretionary power, it may well be answered, that it is fit the state should have an eye over his actions, and that an appeal should lie from his tribunal to the dernier resort. If it appears in some cases, that his judgments are wrong, and that nevertheless he gave them according to conscience and his opinion, the judgment may be reversed, without any infamy attending the judge. But if it appears, that he has been biassed by evil motives to give even a right determination, then he deserves to be punished with severity. Such salutary provisions as these, against the licentiousness of a bad magistrate, can never become restraints on the freedom of a good one. In Persia, as all subordinate judicatures are derived from the sovereign, so they are under his immediate inspection; for he communicates his authority, without quitting the throne, or sharing it with any one. And certainly the wisdom and power of a great prince must be much more awful to a magistrate, than the divided councils of a popular assembly. How moving is that lesson of integrity to the passion of fear, which may be learnt from the exemplary punishment inflicted by CAMBYSES on a corrupt judge! He ordered his body to be flayed after his

death, and that the seat in the court where he presided, and where his son succeeded him, should be covered with the skin. Thus the very chair became a constant monitor of duty to the magistrate.

The laws of Persia, noble GOBRYAS, excel those of Athens in one point, which is esteemed the perfection, and almost the definition, of a free government; "that they indulge the greatest liberty of accusing, with the least of calumniating." For in Athens, if an accusation is found to be false and malicious, the accuser is only fined in a certain sum of money; whereas in Persia he suffers all those punishments, which would have been inflicted on the accused, had the accusation been made out. I never reflect on the illustrious instance, which our monarch once gave of his impartial regard to this law, without being wrapt in admiration of such exalted virtue. One of his favourites, thou knowest, attempted formerly to make him suspect the honesty of a faithful officer. The officer was imprisoned; the charge being examined, proved groundless, and the king turned his whole indignation on the perfidious informer. He wisely saw, that to have done otherwise would have been to open a door to envy, revenge, and defamation; to arm malice with the public authority; and to deprive the throne of its most sacred character, "the protection of innocence from specious calumnies, or lawless oppression."

C.

L E T T E R CXXVIII.

CLEANDER TO GORRYAS

THOU hast encouraged me noble scribe, to transmit many papers of a political kind to the court of Persia. I will now open to thee the rise and progress of the constitution of Athens, since it is well worth thy notice. They give no account of themselves before OGYGES, and that is sufficiently romantic. They speak of his age in the highest terms of foolish admiration; and affirm, that when the rest of the world was in a state of ignorance and darkness, they were flourishing in arts and power. But after a reign of thirty-two years, a flood swept away not only their cities, and historical records, but both the monarch and the people. After a long interval of time, CECROPS with some followers came out of Ægypt, and settled in Attica, where they united into a small community. This prince built a town, which he called after himself CECROPIA, on the rock, where the citadel now stands, and instituted four tribes. In the reign of CECROPS the second, they talk of twelve little cities, which were dispersed over the country, each of them enjoying separate privileges and immunities. Cecropia was the capital, where the king resided, to whom, in cases of difficulty or of danger, the subjects dutifully applied. I will not insist on the hardships, through which THESEUS struggled in his way to the kingdom. It is well known, that after having defeated the sons of

PANDION his grand-father, who contested the sovereignty with him, and freed his country from the yoke of MINOS, he diligently watched over its interests, reformed it, and was properly the first lawgiver, who appeared in it. He collected the people into one city, by which means, though he added to their strength, yet he laid a foundation for continual animosities, and gave a lurking principle of death to the constitution. For whenever the body of men, that compose the state, are united in one city, they must frequently be disturbed by political tempests. In such governments the pursuits of ambition engage every man from the greatest to the meanest; and hence arises the most factious and unsteady genius of a republic. He established a common court of justice; and to shew his reverence to the Gods, and especially to the Deity, from whose name the town was called Athens, he ordained the feast Panathenæa. To give a sanction to his conduct, THESEUS, like other legislators, consulted the oracle, and promised to lay down the regal power, reserving only the military command, and guardianship of the laws, to himself. He divided the Athenians into three ranks of noblemen, husbandmen, and artificers. The first excelled in honour, the next in riches, and the third in number. These changes were so well received, that no further alteration was made in their affairs, till after the death of CODRUS by the abolition of kings, who at that time retained only the titles of royalty, with no more power than THESEUS, and not so much authority. Perpetual and decennial Archons soon sunk into annual ones; and DRACO was at last nominated, not indeed to alter the general plan of the state, but to make some farther and more particular provision in matters of private right. This man, however, having little knowledge of mankind, and a very bad opinion of them, was unfit for the office; and, with

an unparalleled severity, inflicted death for every offence, as well as that of murder. So that it were better to have lived in a state of nature, when the law of retaliation took place, than under the savage system of DRACO. Thou may'st easily conjecture, GOBRYAS, no people could bear this. Within the space of a few years they invested SOLON with an unlimited power over the whole œconomy of their constitution. In the course of my dispatches I have already given thee some account, how far he new modelled it. It is certain, he always designed to temper the people by the nobility; and to check the petulance of those, who have most interest in the state, by those, who have most wisdom in it. His republican plans were somewhat interrupted by the short-lived influence of PISISTRATUS; but on the murder of HIPPARCHUS, and the flight of HIPPIAS, his sons, (the last of whom persuaded DARIUS to the destructive war against the Greeks) CLISTHENES revived them, and added new laws both in completion and amendment of the scheme of SOLON.

The greatest blow, that ever was given to the firmness and tranquillity of the Athenian government, came from the best man, who in any age has lived under it, ARISTIDES; and he was among the first, who felt the consequences of it. But it was owing, not to choice but to necessity; for the people (as I have hinted in a * former letter) grew turbulent at home, being elated with their success abroad at Plataea; so he agreed to admit them to an equal capacity of bearing offices with the three rich orders of the state, who were divided by SOLON, according to the valuation of their fortunes, and had till then composed the senate of four hundred. Hence all orders, contrary to the institution of SOLON, were promiscuously blended, and the senate not

* Letter XIII.

being made up of the natural aristocracy, were in name only distinct from the assembly, but were divested in fact of all separate authority. The Demagogues, who were to report matters from the senate, proposed them, not only to the determination, but to the debate of the people, which to this day maintains two opposite parties in the city. Indeed the balance of the republic was never well fixed, since before the expedition of XERXES, it was in danger of falling into an oligarchy, as it has now fallen into the hands of the multitude. Such effects are consequent on two original defects in its settlement: the first is an unequal distribution of property, whence a fluctuation of power ensues; and the other is an uncertain division of privileges between the senate and people, in the transaction of business, which (joined to the other cause) produces perpetual sedition. As these original faults in the constitution have given rise to disorders in the administration, so a very blameable fault, that took its rise in the administration, is like to bear hard on the constitution. I will explain it to thee fully. Thou knowest it is the aim of this republic, and agreeable to the principles, on which it has been founded, to extend its commerce, and increase the number of its dependent states. It is in pursuance of this plan of empire, that the youth, when they enter into the service, take an oath to improve the dominions of Athens to the utmost of their abilities, "while there are vineyards and olive trees without its limits." How often has it sent forth colonies to build new cities, armies to subdue new countries, and brought home the corn of Ægypt, and the spices of Arabia, in the ships of its wealthy traders! Thus they have raised a name, which is immortal, and accordingly for some time placed themselves at the head of this country. But by cruelty to those, who openly acknowledged their power, and arrogance over those, who connived at it, they have been forced to contract their views, and, instead of

endeavouring to propagate, they are now labouring to preserve their influence.

Noble GOBRYAS, behold Athens, and Laccædmon, the one formed for *encrease*, and the other for * *preservation*, acting in contradiction to the express design of their law-givers, and the genius of their states. The one drawn into a posture of mere defence by its madness in prosperity; the other betrayed into an † offensive war by its own jealousy and the voice of its allies. Then penetrate into the dark abyfs of futurity, and reflect on the ruin of Greece.

C.

* See Letter CXVIII, towards the conclusion.

† Ibid.

L E T T E R CXXXIX.

CLEANDER TO HIPPIAS.

THOU art acquainted doubtless with the unbounded liberties taken by this people, in censuring the conduct of their great men. When the national vivacity is suffered to evaporate in words, it seldom breaks out into action, and their ministers are safe from the severe penalty of a fine, or the infamy of ostracism. Some restraint however is to be wished, notwithstanding it is wisely neglected: for though a privilege of that kind thus openly indulged keeps alive the spirit of liberty; yet when carried to its utmost height, it may discourage the honest and able servants of the public, while it makes the proud, the wicked, or the ignorant more irreclaimable, and more desperate. Thou knowest I have professed, ever since my arrival in this city, to converse with all ranks and professions of men in it. The use I would make of this I need not explain to thee, who art as well versed in the knowledge of mankind, as thou art in the sentiments and weaknesses of thy brother. The merchants are so considerable a body in the Athenian commonwealth, that it was impossible for one acting in the double capacity of agent for the great king, and HIPPIAS of Ephesus, to omit a particular application to them. I generally walk down to the Pyræus one day in the week, where I discourse promiscuously with the various traders of the place, enquire concerning the imports and exports, the prices of commodities, and the number and cargoes of the vessels, that come into the harbour, or go out of it.

I had an opportunity of seeing a remarkable instance of the ruling passion I have spoken of, on occasion of a report, which was current on the day the other morning, that advice was just arrived of the capture of an Athenian ship richly laden, by a Corinthian galley of some force, near Salamis. It was said to be taken in sight of two or three men of war, who were sent out by the admiral of the state on a cruise. I confess it appeared to me from the circumstances of the story, that neither the admiral, nor his officers, much less those, who are at the head of affairs, as worthless as their characters, or as fickle as their measures may be, had been guilty of negligence; yet they were equally blamed without judgment or humanity. The heat of conversation drew out a friend, whom I talked with on this subject, into general reflections on the prosecution of the quarrel, the distress of the Athenians, and a most virulent abuse, not only on the present, but even the late leaders of the assembly. "I am convinced, said he, that nothing but a view to private interest could have induced PERICLES to so hazardous a step, as engaging with the power of all Greece against us! No progress has been made in the war from the beginning; and we are removed further from the prospect of peace than at first. All possible calamities are suffered in Attica; our enemies insult over our wasted country, and never feel the same inconveniences at home. Indeed the management is lately turned into another channel; yet the face of affairs is not changed. Observe, how trade, the life and glory of the Athenians, is in all parts carried on with danger, and in some prevented entirely. Our intercourse with the colonies in Asia is interrupted by the vigilance of the enemy; our traffic with Ægypt is at an end. The Hellespont, the Euxine, and Ægean seas swarm with the pirates of the lesser islands, and infest the passage of our ships; nay, they dare to annoy us in the very mouth of the Piræus; and it

is in vain, that Athens boasts of its superiority at sea, while our strength is either unskilfully used, or faintly exerted. For my own part, I think nothing more desirable than peace to a people, that exists by commerce. In the mean time, it were worth while for us, to put the administration of the war into hands, that may soon bring it to an end by conducting it with activity."

I assure you, it was no easy thing for me to stop my friend in the career of his eloquence, to which he had given the reins very freely. "If my memory, returned I, does not fail me, it was an opinion pretty generally held, before the war broke out, that the Corinthian commerce was encreasing so immoderately, that Athens had reason to entertain some jealousy. It was said particularly, that the Corinthians began to succeed better in the importation of corn, than this city; and for that reason it was even esteemed a fortunate circumstance, that hostilities between the Peloponnesians and your state were almost in course inevitable. Nor was it, I believe, of little weight in the debates and resolutions, which brought on the war, that several merchants had presented a petition to the assembly, requesting them to enter into some method of preventing the decay of the corn trade, which is one of your most valuable commodities. At that time it was farther agreed, that you would be able to injure the commerce of the Peloponnesians, more than it would be possible for them to injure yours. Yet you are impatient at the least loss of your own, though it be abundantly recompensed by the losses of your enemy. You were then too sanguine to think of the difficulties that attend a war, and you talk inconsistently now. You looked upon victory as the inseparable companion of your fleets, and fancied the name of Athens would awe the states of Greece into submission. Behold, how the event differs from the expectation! The

only resource left for the disappointed is to be angry with their leaders. For as it is usual for the unsuccessful pilot of a commonwealth to impute the faults arising from his own imprudence to ill fortune; so it is no less usual for those, who suffer in the consequence, without being concerned in the management, to impute the faults arising from ill fortune to a want of prudence. Were I to act as a minister on the theatre of the republic, next to my integrity, I own, I would comfort myself with this reflection, that the wisdom of THEMISTOCLES, ARISTIDES, CIMON, and PERICLES, could never satisfy the body of Athenian merchants."

I am sensible, dearest HIPPIAS, thou dost not think thyself concerned in these remarks. Above indulging the rough petulance of pride, or the silly suggestions of ignorance, thou dost not set an extravagant value on thy own importance to thy country, nor forget to make proper allowances for the mistakes of thy governors; remembering, that they judge before the event, and thou judgest after it. The merchants, who traffic under the protection of the great king, are much fitter subjects for the comparison, which poets have drawn in their fancy, between the industry of bees and that of traders, than the merchants of this city. The latter imitate the frugal inhabitants of the hive in nothing but their attention to wealth; and though they contribute a share of it to support their country, yet murmur and repine at those, who dispose of it; while the former (agreeably to what curious naturalists have observed of the same animals) intent on their proper business, and meddling not with things beyond their reach, if the affairs of their king should require it, would lay the whole of that wealth with pleasure at the foot of his throne.

L E T T E R CXXX.

CLEANDER TO SMERDIS.

*MY situation obliges me to a constant neglect of ZERDUSHT's institutions; but his everlasting law shall prevail in my heart, where I cannot make open profession of it. I can here give no outward expression of my faith, and, to all appearance, am as much an idolater as those I converse with. I dare not so much as put on the badge of our religion, the sacred girdle. I am eye-witness of numberless unnecessary pollutions of the elements; and pass by, without shewing disgust, such abominations, as it would ill become me to repeat to the holiest of the magi. I am satisfied, that the precepts of ZERDUSHT are wise, but cannot always be followed. Many righteous Persians die childless; yet it seems to be enjoined as a duty, that all

* The letters of moral and religious speculation in CLEANDER's correspondence may be divided, like the Dialogues of PLATO, and the philosophic pieces of other great men of antiquity, into the esoteric and exoteric. Those, which contain his inward doctrine, are addressed to ORSAMES; but those of the opposite turn to SMERDIS. In Letter CIII, he tells his friend, the young nobleman, that "his sentiments of all the known modes of popular worship are unsettled;" yet here, and in other epistles to the mage, we find him scrupulously attached to the little forms and ceremonies of the religion he professed. This can be reconciled on no other supposition, than that he had adopted the double doctrine of his favourites, the Greek philosophers.

should leave children behind them. "Children, says the prophet, are a bridge, that reaches to paradise. How shall ye pass over, if ye have provided no bridge? The angel shall ask every soul, if he have provided children; if he answer no, the soul, that has contributed so little to society, shall himself be left desolate on the banks of a river, where he shall see the fresh springs and blooming fruits of paradise, but shall never be able to arrive at them."

"Again, said ZERDUSHT, if thou knowest, that a corpse is hid in the earth, and sufferest it to lie there, and defile that element, it shall be a scorpion in thy clothes, and a serpent in thy bed;" a precept, which can by no means be complied with in Greece, where it is the custom to bury all the dead.

The planting of a tree is always a practicable duty, and very useful to posterity. In this particular I have greatly exceeded the commandment; I have a fair garden of fruit trees near Ephesus to testify it, a long avenue of limes in PHILEMON's estate, a rising grove of pines in Salamis; not to mention that beautiful olive, which I religiously planted in the peaceful gardens of the magi.

I read the books of our prophet; I thrice a day prostrate myself to MITHRAS; and, when I eat, I give something to the dogs, to remind me of the duties of charity. Before I wash, or take my rest, or go upon business, or a journey, I use the forms prescribed by ZERDUSHT; and because these compliances are very imperfect, I solemnly observe the feast of CHURDAD to expiate the necessary omissions of duty. I submit with reverence to thy censures, SMERDIS; "for the rebukes of a priest, a parent, and an instructor, shall be received with meekness, says ZERDUSHT; for their services can never be repayed."

Happy art thou in the recesses of Bactria, guarded by ministring genii, who will not suffer the suspicion of guilt to rest upon thee ! Temperance governs thy meals, and sweet sleep attends thy bed. Thou risest before MITHRAS, and awaitest his coming with thy supplications, and liest prostrate before him, till he has mounted far above the horizon. Thou feedest the sacred fires of BALCH with precious oils, and with odorous flowers and spices, which thou gatherest from the garden of the magi. At noon, when thou retirest to thy myrtle bower, thou hymnest the praises of OROMASDES more melodiously than the Thracian ORPHEUS, who, they tell us, appeased the infernal powers with the music of his lyre.

When thou visitest thy solitary cave, all nature lies open before thee. Thou reflectest on the regular change of the seasons, that mark of an invariable beneficent providence. Thou studiest the course of the heavenly bodies, and comprehendest in thy capacious mind that circulation of time, which contains all their revolutions. The concave of the heavens thou hast delineated on the arched roof of thy grotto, and adorned the horizon with the emblems of a balance, a rule, and a bridle, to signify weight, measure, and the guidance of OROMASDES.

H,

L E T T E R CXXXI.

ARTAPHERNES to CLEANDER. From Sardis.

I have lately received an order under the Imperial signet, which calls me away from this place to assist in the supreme council upon the vacancy by MEGABYZUS's death. The government of Sardis, and the care of the province, are entrusted to PISUTHNES during my absence, who will find all things in a state of perfect tranquillity. Sardis is so strongly fortified, and its magazines are at present so well supplied, that without that fabulous security, to which it trusted in ancient times, it may justly be called to this day the key of the lesser Asia; and a place of this strength in the hands of faithful governors will always have a great influence over the neighbouring Provinces. Excuse me, CLEANDER, if I cannot help recapitulating the circumstances of my own life, and the interesting events in my family, which have in a particular manner engaged my affections to this place. My father, ARTAPHERNES, in joint command with DATIS, revenged upon the Greeks the injury they did to DARIUS when they reduced this city to ashes; and they have seen it rebuilt by me, the grandson of another ARTAPHERNES who valiantly held out the citadel against them, while the rest of Sardis was in flames. In the old city the houses were chiefly built of cane; which was the occasion, that the conflagration spread so instantly; but there are now no buildings but of brick or stone. The forum, which was

originally a noble design, has been in this reign considerably enlarged. The river Pactolus, thou knowest, runs through the midst of it; and it takes in a view of the Tmolus with its fruitful vines, and the springs falling down its sides. I have enjoyed here, for the greatest part of my time, a state of ease with dignity. When the province of Lydia was added to my former government, I entered upon a more unquiet scene; but that lasted no longer than to give me an opportunity of approving the zeal and fidelity of my conduct to ARTAXERXES: and I now leave the province with less reluctance, since his service requires it from me.

It was resolved in the council of seven, a little before MEGABYZUS's death, that a body of sixty thousand choice troops should be appointed to encamp near Sardis early in the next spring. By this the Greeks will be made sensible, that Persia is preparing to take a part in the Peloponnesian quarrel, and intends not to let slip so critical a conjuncture as the present may seem, to cancel the disgrace of former treaties. If my advice shall be of any weight in the councils of Persia, I shall earnestly insist upon the claims already made being adhered to, as conditional to our entering into a league with Sparta. XERXES laid claim even to the dominion of Greece, because PELOPS, a vassal of his ancestors, had transplanted thither a colony of the Lydians, and subdued the peninsula, called after him the Peloponnesus. I will not take upon me to ascertain his pretensions, since this happened so long ago as under the old Assyrian monarchy. But this I am sure of, that unless our present demands be complied with, of a free navigation on the Grecian seas, and that ARTAXERXES be put in full possession of the colonies in Asia, which are founded upon much more defensible pretensions, there can no league be

granted to Sparta, but by our assisting that republic on very dishonourable and disadvantageous terms.

It has been thought expedient, that some experienced officers, who have served in Greece, should review our new raised forces in their winter quarters, and make improvements in the military discipline after the Grecian manner. This was wisely suggested, and at a very proper time, in a letter to MEGABYZUS. The fatal miscarriages of our undertakings against the Greeks ought indeed to have convinced us, that the arts of war and conquest are to be learnt from our enemies; a truth, CLEANDER, which my father ARTAPHERNES, after many glorious and faithful services, lived to inculcate from his own experience; happy in this at least, that the part he acted was always great, though the fortune of his life was various.

I much applaud myself, CLEANDER, for having recommended thee to the service of the great king, who with such unwearied diligence hast watched over the affairs of Greece. I am not ignorant, that, notwithstanding thou hast deserved so well of Persia, there are some, who have shewn themselves very insensible of thy merits. But continue thou to serve our sovereign with the same spirit and resolution, and assure thyself of always finding ARTAPHERNES in the number of thy most zealous friends. Adieu.

L.

L E T T E R CXXXII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

I was yesterday morning surprized by a visit from ZO-PYRUS; and think it my duty, noble scribe, to give thee a recital of the conversation, as I know thou art attentive to his behaviour, not only because of thy personal concern for the family of MEGABYZUS, but because of the consequences of his future rashness or sobriety to thy master and thy country. Thou mayst easily conjecture, that during my residence in the palace of my ever honoured patron, I had contracted some acquaintance with him, for the sake of his own parts and spirit, and of his relation to that great man. I was a good deal struck with seeing him again after an interval of many years; and though I could not receive him otherwise than affectionately, yet, on account of his late proceedings, I was willing to shew him a little degree of coolness and reserve. He prevented all my questions, by telling me, that he had taken Ephesus in his way from Susa, and had seen my brother HIPPIAS, from whom he learnt, that we were embarked together in trade, and that I was settled here to carry on that part of it, which depended on the commodities of Greece, while he managed every thing which belongs to the traffic of the east.

As soon as the ordinary compliments were over, his countenance, on a sudden, lost its gaiety, and assumed an air that bespoke a dissatisfied mind. "You may wonder, said he, if you have not heard my story, what could draw ZOPYRUS from the seat of his friends and kindred, to engage in the company and projects of bold adventurers; nor when you have heard it, will there be room for wonder." It is true, returned I, no man in Athens can be a stranger to the character or history of MEGABYZUS and his sons; much less can I, whose curiosity would prompt me to enquire into, as well as whose gratitude would make me anxious for, the fate of your illustrious house, be uninformed or uninterested in its honour or reproach. "You know then, replied ZOPYRUS, all that has past since the death of my father; nor would I choose, by relating it to you, to trace over in my mind those misfortunes, which I wish might be for ever blotted out of my own memory, and the annals of posterity. But such is the nature of disgrace, that when it has fallen upon us, it is perpetually haunting our thoughts, since its impressions are more lively and lasting than those of happiness. After the iniquity of APOLLONIDES was discovered and punished, I asked the king to bestow on me the government of Damascus; a request, in which I fancied myself sufficiently supported by my birth and quality, and my diligence in the army. By means of that faction, which has been long working in vain to ruin the credit of MEGABYZUS, it was refused me; and though I was civilly told, I should one day be remembered, I regarded it as unbecoming the son of a minister, who had deserved so well for his abilities, to endure a repulse without resenting it. In this too I follow his own example, and approve myself the heir of his virtues, who deserted the service of his prince with the same zeal, and from the same principle, which distinguished him from all

others, when he acted in it." You forget, said I, one part of your father's conduct, the most honourable part of it, his returning to court and to his duty. Thus you seem to propose a very partial imitation of him. Forgive me, ZOPYRUS, that I take upon me the privilege of a friend, and advise you to consider well, before you pursue such measures, as may blast those hopes, which your country has conceived of you, and put a reconciliation with ARTAXERXES beyond your power. I desire not to enter into the secret policy of your schemes, whether they are well laid, and likely to succeed; or whether they are refined and fantastic. "As to these, answered he, be under no concern." Yes, replied I, you must permit me to be concerned for your safety; nor impute this to an over diffidence arising from experience, but to a well-timed discretion. For if men in years are apt to be slow in resolving, because they think it difficult to correct the bad consequences of imprudence; remember, that youth, mistaking the reverse of wrong for right, imagine their spirit will make amends for the errors of their judgment. In what way did you leave Susa? "I left it, returned he, without desiring an audience of leave, or conferring with any of the ministers. As soon as GOBRYAS delivered me the king's answer, which, I must confess, he did in the most obliging manner, I went abruptly from court, to seek ARTYPHIUS my brother, who at that time was in the forest of Nyssa. He endeavoured to give me comfort under my disappointment; but I despised it with reason, and told him, that I saw the administration of affairs would fall into the hands of TERYBAZUS the treasurer, and BAGORAZES the cup-bearer, my father's avowed enemies; that he might expect our family would meet with no encouragement from them; and it were well, if we did not feel the effects of their oppression. I added, that for my own part I was determined to be out of their reach, to court the protection of

of some foreign power, or plant a colony in some distant country. Soon after I set out for Athens, where I looked for an hospitable reception from the gratitude of this city to my * mother; and you see, I have found it, and am thankful for it."

"Methinks, answered I, you were governed by a rash jealousy in mistrusting the honour of the king, and believing, that the craft of any servant could induce him to neglect the sons and dependents of MEGABYZUS. How much better had it been for you to have waited the leisure of our sovereign; nor thought yourself disgraced in a denial of the first request! You had now been in possession of a rich satrapy, or honoured with a mark of distinction. In what state can you expect to find equal favour or security with that which Susa can afford you? And as to founding a colony, you will meet with too many difficulties to make it either safe or desirable, and be attended with too few followers, to prevent it from being absurd or impracticable. Would not your time have been employed more worthily for a young man, more agreeably to yourself, and in the end perhaps profitably to Persia, in the pursuit of useful literature with the sages of Greece and Ægypt, in studying the sublime doctrines of ZOROASTER with the magi, or in learning the art of war under the greatest officers of the east, than in hearkening to the insinuations of flatterers, and following the counsels of the desperate? Is it not preposterous for a man to put himself into the hopeless condition of one, who has abandoned his country for a crime committed in it, by flying at first unnecessarily in a hasty sally of resentment, and then doing such actions, as must banish him for ever from it? But at the same time that I tell you what different things I expected from the

* Vid. Ctes. Fragm.

innate disposition to virtue, and excellent understanding I have long since observed in you, it gives me pleasure to reflect, that you cannot be disgusted at the truth or the freedom of my censures." "And you would then, replied he, advise me to return?" "Without doubt, said I; can you act more wisely in respect of ARTYPHIUS and the rest of your relations, (for as to yourself I will urge nothing farther, as it is, I am convinced, a consideration of the least weight with you), I say in respect of those, whom you so much esteem, can you act more wisely, than in making a proper submission to the court? Will not your rashness bring suspicions upon them, preclude the favours of the king, and perhaps prove at last their ruin." "That's impossible, interrupted he, with some eagerness. Their success will depend on their own behaviour. CLEANDER, I am never angry with one, who seems to wish me well; but I desire you would neither trouble yourself nor me any longer on this subject. You are an incompetent judge of my designs, as you are unacquainted with them; and to step back, when I am advanced so far, would be both timorous and inconsistent."

Such was our conversation, noble GOBRYAS; such are often the suggestions of a generous mind, misled by youthful vanity, and unfortunately betraying its weakness, when it means to discover its strength. Thus the young ZO-PYRUS, incapable of distinguishing betwixt perseverance and obstinacy, is bent on nothing but acting a consistent part, however indiscreet a one; as if uniformity, for the sake of uniformity, were not a mere imaginary beauty in a great character.

L E T T E R CXXXIII.

CHARICLES TO CLEANDER.

I imagine, thou wilt not think I enter into an unnecessary detail, if, besides laying before thee an account of the manner in which I executed thy commissions at Susa, I enlarge my letter with some particulars of my journey thither, and of the state in which I found affairs at my arrival.

I had no sooner saluted my father HIPPIAS and his family at Ephesus, than I set out for Sardis; where, upon informing PISUTHNES the governor, that I was sent express to court with dispatches from Athens, he gave me immediate orders for post-horses, and the best guides, which the province afforded. Under their direction I proceeded forward through Phrygia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Armenia, and Assyria, till I arrived at Susa, stopping no where any longer than was necessary to take refreshments, and change our horses, at the several public stations, which by the liberality of our monarchs are erected in such numbers through the provinces for the accommodation of travellers, that (as thou must have observed) there are not less than III in the road between SARDIS and SUSA.* Except the inconveniences arising from the fatigue of so long and continued a journey, it was not disagreeable to take a

* The erecting of post-offices for the conveyance of the king's and governor's dispatches was an institution of Cyrus's. For a further account of this matter, see ROLLIN's Ancient Hist. Vol. II.

survey, though a transitory one, of countries varying in their situation, nature, and manners; to ascend mountains famous for their height and steepness; to cross rivers, which visit different kingdoms in their passage; and to traverse plains with the peaceful retinue of a traveller, where the fate of empires has been decided. In particular, I could not help being struck with the contrast between Lydia and Cappadocia. The former entertains one with a view of well cultivated extended plains, hills crowned with the finest woods, and watered by gentle rivulets. The latter presents one with rough craggy mountains, whose sides are worn by the torrents rolling down them; vallies surrounded with dreadful precipices; and rivers, which in the rapidity of their course overflow their banks, and lay waste the country for many parasangs. I met on the road the equipages of several young satraps, who have commands in the army, which is to assemble near Sardis; and was grieved to find, that the number of covered litters, and baggage waggons, which tend to enervate the discipline of our troops, and retard their motions, was not decreased amongst them; but I have since heard, that upon the representation of HYDARNES, who is appointed general of those forces, strict orders have been issued to retrench the number of such magnificent incumbrances. On my arrival at Susa I paid my first respects to the chamberlain HYDASPES, who, induced by that affectionate regard, which he expresses for all who come recommended from thee, received me with open arms, and appointed me a lodging in the spacious apartments allotted him in the palace. I was by him introduced to GOBRYAS, whom we found dictating to the scribes about him dispatches to the different quarters of the empire. There is a politeness and humanity in the countenance and address of HYDASPES, which even at first sight gives you a love for his person; but the penetrating eye, and sensible look of GOBRYAS, his head grown

grey in the service of his prince, and the dignity of his whole appearance, inspire a respect, not less due to the merits of his character, than the eminence of his station. That great minister, after reading your letters, and expressing the satisfaction he always receives from them, entered into conversation with me for three hours on the posture of affairs in Greece. During the time it lasted, I was doubtful which most to admire, his condescension in hearing me discourse upon subjects, wherein he was so much my superior; or the extent of his capacity, which presented every thing to his view; and the exactness of his judgment, which suffered no particular to escape him unexamined or unaccounted for. I find by the idea he has formed of CLEON's character, and the questions he asked me relating to him, he thinks, that turbulent Athenian may either be brought over to the Persian interest, or at least made use of advantageously in regard to the great project which he has in view, of establishing the tranquillity of the empire, by weakening the Grecian states through the means of one another. He seems extremely impatient for the arrival of the Lacedæmonian embassy, and apprehensive, that if a blow is struck on either side before Persia has taken her part in the war, the contending republics will conclude a sudden peace: but he added, that as the jealousies which occasioned this rupture would continue, he scarce thought it would be durable. I endeavoured, in obedience to thy instructions, to discover, how far he would comply with thy desire of being recalled from thy hazardous employment; but from the manner in which he received the hints I let fall, and the unanimous opinion of thy other friends, I think it by no means proper to press that affair any farther at present. When our conference was ended, he told me, he hoped the court of Susa would afford pleasures sufficient to detain me here some time; not, added he smiling, that we will keep you as an hostage for your uncle's fidelity;

but since in two or three months we may have occasion to send him dispatches of the highest importance, I would willingly secure so trusty and expeditious a messenger as yourself to convey them. I replied, I should expect his permission and commands, before I thought of returning to Athens; and so took my leave.

Amidst the variety of objects to engage my attention here, I have not been unmindful, as far as opportunity served, to enquire into the points, which thou gavest me in charge; viz. the continuance of thy enemies practices, and the state of parties at the court. As to the first, I am well assured, that the interest of GOBRYAS, so seasonably exerted in your behalf, and the expressions which the king himself used in your favour, were more than sufficient to confound their malevolent designs. But depend upon it, the malice of TERIBAZUS, whatever countenance he puts on, is by no means diminished; he still resents the disappointment of his chimerical alliance, which he attributes to thy artifice; and whenever his power can second his inclination, thou art like to feel the effects of his displeasure; so true is the old maxim, that those who commit an injury, can never forgive. The animosities between him and GOBRYAS, which were carried on with great warmth on both sides, are now to all outward appearance subsided, in obedience to the king's express direction, who sent for them into his apartment, and exhorted them to unite, at this important juncture, in carrying on his service; "And, if there must be a contention between you, said the king, let it be in promoting such measures, as tend to my honour, and the public welfare."

Your patron is thought to have carried a great point in bringing ARTAPHERNES into the council of seven, when the interest of TISSAPHERNES, master of the horse, was

strongly espoused by TERIBAZUS. In few words, I take the interests of these two ministers to lie thus: GOBRYAS is strongly supported by a personal share in the king's favour, and the general esteem, which the integrity of his behaviour, and his experience in business, have gained him throughout the east. TERIBAZUS relies on his address in creating dependants to himself, his never-failing management of court-intrigues, and the interest, which he always takes care to cultivate with those ladies, whose charms at any time make the deepest impression on his master. Whilst he pays the most servile court to the reigning monarch, he neglects not recommending himself to the future one, by the means of PHARNALYAS, chief eunuch to XERXES.* That young prince affords but a disagreeable prospect to Persia. Shut up in the inmost recesses of his palace, he devotes his whole life to effeminate pleasures; bestowing his confidence and bounties on those only, who can heighten luxury with most elegance, and keep his vicious inclinations perpetually alive by fresh scenes of debauchery. Alike regardless of the happiness of nations, which will one day be entrusted to his care, and the wise admonitions of his father, he plunges out of one course of riot into another, without any real inclination to virtue, or even sense of shame. SOGDIANUS, the eldest of the king's illegitimate children, is remarkable for an outward generosity and openness of temper, is fond of manly sports, and affects making himself agree-

* History confirms the characters which CHARICLES gives of these princes. XERXES, who succeeded his father, reigned but a few days, being assassinated by his brother SOGDIANUS after a debauch, in which he had drank to excess. The latter usurped the crown; but soon made himself so unpopular by his many acts of cruelty, that almost the whole empire joined in supporting the claim of OCHUS, who took the name of DARIUS NOTHUS, and was one of the wisest and best monarchs, who ever sat on the Persian throne. Note by the Translator.

able to the soldiery; but those, who know him best, assure me, he is a master of the art of dissimulation, and has at the bottom a great mixture of brutality and roughness. OCHUS still continues in the government of Hyrcania, where he behaves himself to the general satisfaction of the people †. It is remarked, that the provinces never enjoyed a state of such profound tranquillity; which is attributed in a great measure to the exact observance of an excellent regulation established by our ancient monarchs, viz. the sending inspectors of approved justice and discernment annually through the empire, to examine the behaviour of the governors, and hear the complaints of the subjects.

Thus have I laid before you the present face of things in this court, with more freedom than your Persian friends would venture to do, and with an impartiality (unbiaſſed, as I am, to any side) which will make amends for the other deficiencies of this narration. If I was not sensible, how much you preferred the real offices of respect to the most eloquent professions of them, I might lengthen out this letter by acknowledgments of your kindness to me at Athens, and the recommendations with which you accompanied me hither. Give me leave, however, to say this, that I shall think myself unworthy the near relation I bear to you, when I cease making your virtues the pattern of my actions, and your instructions the rule of my conduct.

P.

† Ibid.

The end of the sixth year of the Peloponnesian war.

*A. M. 3579. 4th year of the 88th Olymp.
The seventh year of the Peloponnesian war.*

L E T T E R CXXXIV.

CLEANDER TO GOBRYAS.

After having dispatched away CHARICLES to Susa with the fullest account of the state of affairs in this city, I resolved to defer writing, till it could reasonably be conjectured, upon what plan the campaign of this summer would proceed, and where the stress of the war would lie. I cannot say, that things are yet arrived at a crisis important enough to determine the last resolutions of the contending states, as to peace amongst themselves, or further alliances with foreign powers; but some late remarkable transactions about PYLUS, which begin to draw the force and attention of Greece to those parts, induce me to lay before the Persian council the state of a war, which ambition, mu-

tual jealousies, and domestic factions have lengthened out to its seventh year.

PYLUS is a fort situated in the territory of the Messenians, not above four hundred stadia from Sparta itself. The place is by nature extremely strong, particularly towards the sea, where the coast is defended by a chain of rocks; and it has the advantage of a safe and spacious harbour. A little off the shore lies the small desert island of Sphaacteria, which so streightens the entrance of the port, that no more than two ships can enter abreast. Early in the spring the Athenians sent out a fleet of forty sail, under the command of SOPHOCLES and EURYMEDON, to assist their allies in Sicily. They had likewise instructions to stop at Corcyra in their passage, and reduce the remains of the aristocratical faction there, who have taken up arms, and fortified themselves in the mountains. DEMOSTHENES, the late general in Ætolia, who was aboard the fleet, advised them in a council of war, to detach a squadron, and take possession of Pylus. He represented it as a place of great importance, which would give them an opportunity of making incursions into Laconia, and retaliating upon the Lacedæmonians the ravages which Attica had suffered during the war. He argued farther, that it would animate the Messenians, who had been subdued and cruelly treated by the republic of Sparta, to throw off the yoke, and excite the Helots to rise, and free themselves from the oppressions of harsh and severe masters. However plausible this proposal might appear, the other generals refused to give their consent to it; for they urged, that the advantages of seizing Pylus would not countervail the charge and difficulty of keeping it. Observe the caprice of fortune, noble scribe; chance affected, what all the plausible reasoning of DEMOSTHENES could not

compass. A contrary wind arising in their passage drove them into the very harbour of Pylus, where, as they were obliged to land and refresh their men, the soldiers took such a liking to the place, that, without staying for orders, they began to fortify it of themselves, and in six days time put it out of any danger of a surprize. It was in vain for the officers to oppose the work, when once it was put in execution, and they found it agreeable to the army. They therefore made DEMOSTHENES governor of the fort, left him a small garrison and five ships to defend it, and held on their course for Corcyra. The news of taking Pylus found Sparta engaged in the celebration of some great festival; and though at first they affected to despise it, the magistrates, upon better consideration, sent orders to their king AGIS, who had entered Attica at the head of the Peloponnesian army, and was laying waste an exhausted country, to return immediately, and expel the Athenians from Pylus. They also used their utmost diligence in assembling a fleet from Corinth, and their other allies, to block up the place by sea. The submission and exactness, with which the mandates of the ephori are obeyed, is inexpressible. The land army amounting to twelve thousand men, which had stayed but fifteen days in Attica, decamped immediately, and marched toward the extremity of Peloponnesus, to form the siege of Pylus. About the same time a squadron of sixty sail appeared off the place, and put the garrison out of all hopes of receiving provision or relief. DEMOSTHENES, on the point of being besieged both by land and sea, sent an account of his distress to NICIAS commander of the Athenian squadron at ZACYNTHUS, desiring immediate succours, without which he could not answer for the safety of the place; and at the same time he dispatched messengers hither to re-

quest, that further reinforcements might be got ready with all expedition; but unluckily for the Athenians, there have been so many delays, to which their counsels are very liable, that the Lacedæmonians have made all their preparations without disturbance. We hear, they have invested Pylus on all sides; their land forces have cast up intrenchments, and are preparing machines to attack the walls. THRASYMELIDAS, the admiral, is ready to shut up the entrance of the port with a double line of galleys, and has thrown a detachment of picked men into the island of Sphacteria, in order to complete the blockade, and prevent the only thing they are apprehensive of, the relief of Pylus by sea. Most people here, from the smallness of the garrison, and the strength of the besieging army, give the place for lost, unless NICIAS makes some brisk and speedy effort to raise the siege; but that, his enemies affirm, is not to be expected from the timidity of his nature, and the slowness of his resolutions.

As I am now writing, noble scribe, I am told, that an express, who with great hazard has escaped through the besieger's lines, is arrived from Pylus, and gone directly to the Prytanes. The multitude begin to fill the streets, and require with clamours an immediate summons to the assembly.

I am just returned from it, and can assure thee, that he brings an account of a most desperate assault sustained by the garrison the thirteenth of this moon. The Lacedæmonians attacked the fort by sea with good hopes of success; for though the rocks and roughness of the waves were no small hindrances to their design, the fortifications in that part were weakest. DEMOSTHENES put himself at the head of three hundred heavy-armed sol-

diers and a few archers, whom he drew up on the shore ; and after animating them by a short but spirited harangue, determined his brave followers to stand the assault. The enemy made their attack by different squadrons, which succeeded each other ; but they met so warm a reception, that none of the ships were able to disembark their men. BRASIDAS the Spartan obliged his pilot to run him a ground, and attempted to land his soldiers ; and though no one could behave with more personal bravery than that gallant officer, killing several of those who defended the place with his own hand, yet after receiving several wounds, which disabled him from giving orders, he put back to sea with great difficulty. His buckler, which was dropt in the fight and taken, was set up by DEMOSTHENES, as a trophy of his success, when the action was over ; which, for the time it lasted, the express says, all confessed was the hottest they ever were engaged in.

As the siege of Pylus seems likely to collect the main force both of Athens and Sparta, and the former are not less eager to preserve, than the latter are to recover their possession of the fort ; some decisive stroke, it is imagined must ensue.

Thou wilt receive from CRATIPPUS the certainty, of what I am here told, that the ruling party of Sparta are hastening away their ambassadors to the sublime court. Whilst they are uncertain, how this affair will end, the king may obtain advantageous terms ; but good fortune will render them insolent, and adversity oblige them to strike up a sudden accommodation. There are a set of men in this republic, potent lord, who would not be displeased to anticipate Sparta in the project of a Persian

league. PYTHON presses the necessity of it in all his dispatches; and in his last, after acquainting the senate with the conference, of which thou sentest me a relation, assures them, "that the ministry of the great king are resolved to make the best use of the dissensions in Greece; that no remonstrances of softening speeches he can frame, will prevent their assisting the party, which offers the most probable conditions; that the point is not now, whether it would be honourable for the Greeks to unite with Barbarians, but whether Athens, or her enemies, shall reap the benefit of the Persian arms." This measure is notwithstanding so disagreeable at present to the majority of the people, who think their own strength sufficient to carry them through all difficulties, and would give such a handle to NICIAS and his friends to complain, that there was an intention to perpetuate the war, that those, who are in their hearts the greatest advocates for it, dare not openly propose it in the assembly. ZOPYRUS, whose arrival here I signified in my last letters, has collected a body of adventurers of different nations, Corcyreans, Rhodians, and Athenians, with whom he intends to make a settlement at Caunus; and, by his intelligence in the place, hopes to become master of it without much difficulty. The expences of this expedition are defrayed by a society of Athenian merchants, who are tempted to come into it, by the convenient situation of Caunus for trade, and the commodiousness of its port and arsenal. ZOPYRUS carries with him ten ships, having five hundred men on board, and will sail in a few days. I have already put AMORGES, governor of Caria, on his guard, and exhorted him to reinforce the castle of Imbrus, and seize all suspected persons. It grieves me, generous GOBRYAS, that the son of my illustrious patron should behave himself in a manner so disreputable to his name, family, and fortunes.

But we often see, that ARIMANIUS takes a malignant pleasure in clouding the memory of an eminent person with disgrace, by leading into vice, or overwhelming with calamities, his degenerate or unhappy posterity.

P.

L E T T E R CXXXV.

HIPPIAS to CLEANDER. From Ephesus.

THE capricious Athenians, among whom thou sojourneſt, cannot even ſacrifice to the exigencies of the commonwealth, their inſatiable thirſt, and unaccountable eagernels after news. How often haſt thou heard them in their portico's, when their fate and fortunes ſeemed to be in imminent hazard, idly inquiſitive, and prepoſterouſly ſollicitous about the trivial and domeſtic occurrences of private men and families, hardly worthy the attention of the moſt diſengaged inhabitant of that potent city? And can thy brother then want an excuſe for diverting a while, in this way, the courſe of thy ſage meditations; whoſe humble and obſcure ſtation ſetteth him far below ſuch anxiety for the public, which in him would be intolerable affectation; while yet the love of his country inſpireth him with the moſt ardent wiſhes for its proſperity, and engageth him in never-ceaſing ſupplications to the divine OROMASDES, for the continuance of the health of ARTAXERXES, and the ſucceſs of his wiſe and able miniſters? Yet before I turn to the peculiar ſubject of this letter, let

me assure thee, that thy last dispatch of the sixth day of the preceeding moon was transmitted to the noble GOBRÝAS, with the fidelity and expedition, which I have ever observed, since I was honoured with the charge of receiving thy informations, and forwarding them to the Persian court. The city, in which I live, regardless in great measure of the bustle and havock, which agitate the opposite coasts of Greece, and only intent on schemes for the improvement of trade, and encouragement of arts, hath suffered itself to be called off, for a little while, even from these important contemplations, and is now almost universally taken up in discoursing and debating on a late event, which hath amazed them all; and which, how uninteresting soever it may be to others, is not so to thee, from a long and intimate acquaintance with the persons to whom it relates.

Thou must needs remember when thou lesteft Ephesus last, with how much warmth and eagerness of love the young and lively HELIODORUS pursued the eldest and fairest of the charming offspring of the venerable DIOPHANES, the priest of JUPITER. Thou canst not forget, with how much inoffensive pleasantry, and genuine Attic wit, thou wast wont to accuse the amorous and gay servant of APOLLO, of almost giving up his duty to his passion; and making the cloisters of that temple, in which he constantly resideth, resound much more and oftener with the praises of the beautiful ANTIOPE, than even with those of the far-beaming God, whose altar is day and night illuminated with a thousand burning tapers, in feint and feeble emulation of his enlivening rays, and at the foot of whose resplendent shrine innumerable votaries repose themselves nightly, hoping to obtain from the father of oracles some prophetic impulses, concerning their future lives and fortunes. Every one here seemed to wish, and even to

augurate success to so well-grounded an affection; and declared by almost an unanimous suffrage and judgment, that the Gods themselves had, as it were, designedly formed the charms of ANTIOPE, to bless her agreeable adorer; and the natural gaiety and easy vivacity of HELIODORUS, to complete the happiness of his beloved mistress. Thou mightest have seen them often together, soon as the radiant MITHRAS had withdrawn his sultry beam to gladden nations, now pining and sickening at his regretted absence, walking hand in hand along the sacred grove, which surroundeth APOLLO's Fane; followed by the applauses of multitudes, who were scarce able to restrain their tongues from crying after them, what their thoughts had often whispered to them in silence, Go on, ye lovely, loving pair! Go on and prosper! Enjoy unenvied the natural converse of each other, with a satisfaction and happiness peculiarly your own! Nor did it appear ever, that the virgin herself was ill pleased with these whispers and rumours, which some one or other was perpetually acquainting her with; whilst her lover discovered by an inexpressible gaiety, which he took no pains to conceal or to excuse, how strongly and how agreeably he was affected with this general destination of so much sweetness and goodness to his arms. His spirits ever chearful, and raised far above those of his equals, and familiars, and colleagues, were visibly and remarkably higher for some months. In good humour with himself and all about him, he seemed to have obtained to himself a fore-taste of the bliss, which all men bestowed on him; and which he seemed desirous to repay them by an affability and ease, which gladdened all who came near him. His conversation, ever sprightly and flowing, became now in a much greater degree so; and what in most lovers is wont to drive away their best friends, the never-ceasing recital of the fancied charms and imaginary accomplishments of

their mistresses, (tiresome subject to an indifferent ear !) was yet so varied and diversified by the inexhaustible vein of HELIODORUS, that I have heard many profess, (and I cannot but profess the same of myself) they could hear him with pleasure descanting hours together on the same reputed irksome topic. His lyre, the exact type of himself, was never silent. Every charm and grace of ANTIOPE, (and thou knowest what all Greece sayeth and thinketh of her matchless beauty and wit,) furnished his fruitful genius with fresh matter for some new ode or hymn, which he would come forth and chaunt to his lyre, while the walls of the temple rendered back each harmonious accord in repeating echoes, and the voices of its officers, from the highest to the lowest, (such was their love of HELIODORUS !) still joined in chorus with the ravished author, and in concert with him gave their assent and applause to each enraptured thought.

Nothing, it was thought, would or could disconcert their loves. Yet, couldst thou think it ? the cruel fair one too fond of emulating the silver-shafted queen, whose worship is established here, and of spending her life in devotion and a perpetual attendance on the service of the great DIANA in her magnificent temple, hath, within these few days, peremptorily forbidden the late sanguine votary of PHOEBUS, to entertain any hopes of her ever yielding to his desires, which he now thought it proper to make an open profession of. Nor can the grave authority of DIOPHANES, nor the winning eloquence of her brother CHARAXUS, whose long friendship with HELIODORUS, and their common employment in the service of the temple, had fixed firmly in his interests ; no, nor the softer and sweeter persuasions of her fair sisters PENELOPE and EUCHARIS, the least influence the resolute and inexorable maid to a change of her romantic and visionary purpose.

Those amiable virgins, **CLEANDER**, her sisters, (far removed from that narrowness of spirit, which grasps to itself all things, and draws every body into its own power, and which is the certain and never failing concomitant of a mean and abject soul,) think no scorn to recommend earnestly and warmly the slighted lover to their misguided and ill-directed sister. Sensible of her irresistible charms, which they can praise themselves, and hear praised by others, not with patience only and temper, but with pleasure and satisfaction; and not insensible of the merit and good qualities of one, whom they in no sort think the worse of, for not having preferred either of them to their sister; they vouchsafe to employ all the arguments, and all the kind arts they are mistresses of, (and what is the art, of which they are not mistresses?) in his behalf, and for his service. Figure to thyself, **CLEANDER**, the situation; imagine the alteration, which this unexpected and astonishing event has made in the disappointed and thunder-struck youth! Think thou seest the gay, the loud, the talkative, the laughing **HELIODORUS**, sunk in misery, grief, and melancholy! Imagine, thou hearest him, (for he hath at last broken through the obstinate and sullen silence, which he strictly kept for several days,) loudly and passionately complaining, not of **ANTIOPE**, whom he never mentioneth but with transport, and unextinguished affection; but of the immortal Gods themselves, and their providence! Bold licentious man! Yet this, **CLEANDER** is allowed by the principles of Grecian piety. How widely different from those, with which the sage **ZOROASTER** hath inspired the enlightened worshippers of the great and glorious **OROMASDES**! This vain young man is now going to indulge the black humour which governs him at present, and which suggests nothing to his tortured soul but anguish and despair, at a small village, many parasangs north of this city; where he some time since ob-

tained (of that noble and generous patron, whose bounty and liberality had before supported him in splendor and plenty at Ephesus, and on whom thou hast often heard him enlarge with rapture, and a natural eloquence, which his great subject always gave him,) the more humble and retired post of Neëcorus to a small temple, reared in the centre of a dark and thick wood (gloomy as his own thoughts) to the tutelar god of that district.

Thus, CLEANDER, although indeed the virgin-goddes DIANA be the great and celebrated divinity of the mistaken Ephesians; yet VENUS and her artful son find means, as thou seest, to insinuate their worship here, and to shed their baneful influence over the unhappy and unguarded youth. May the gracious OROMASDES preserve my CLEANDER from all such infection, and from the dangerous converse of the virgins of Attica! which, however it may at first appear a species and inviting amusement, is no other nor better, than a pestilent emanation from the detested ARIMANIUS, the author and source of all human evils! Adieu.

S.

L E T T E R CXXXVI.

CLEANDER to ALEXIAS, chief Physician to ARTAXERXES
King of Persia.

ACCORDING to thy desire, I have employed an able friend to procure thee a copy of HIPPOCRATES's genuine works; a business, that requires no small judgment; for a great number of spurious pieces are published under the name of this famous physician. I have likewise endeavoured to get thee some account of his life and character; for which purpose I have made many enquiries of a philosopher here in Athens, who has applied himself more particularly to the study of physic. He informs me, that the practice of this art has long been in the hands of the meanest and most ignorant of the people. Any, who by chance had got a few receipts, immediately called themselves physicians, and were applied to as such, though they had no general knowledge of the natures and virtues of simples, and were wholly ignorant of the structure of the human body; the study of these being kept entirely among the philosophers. Such was the state of physic, when HIPPOCRATES, the son of HERACLIDES, was born in the island of Cos. He is descended from a long race of physicians, being the seventeenth in a direct line from ÆSCULAPIUS, the deified inventor of healing amongst the Greeks, whose art was professed by all his descendants down to HIPPOCRATES. For the Ægyptian custom of instructing the children in their parents employment prevails so much among the physicians here, that their disei-

ples and followers are always called, by a peculiar title, *the Sons of the physicians*. Besides the family receipts, which had been handed down from father to son, and the collected experience of all his ancestors, HIPPOCRATES increased that knowledge, which was his patrimony, by hearing HERODICUS, the inventor of gymnastic physic, which is too severely called by a certain Athenian, "The art of preserving their lives, who ought not to live, and continuing valetudinarians a burden to themselves and society." His native island of Cos afforded him a singular advantage, by having in it a temple of ÆSCULAPIUS full of votive-tablets, on which were registered many cures, and the means by which they were effected; all which he diligently studied and transcribed. He has farther endeavoured to inform himself of the practice which obtained wherever he travelled, as he has done into most countries, though he has chiefly been confined to Thessaly. For this the Greek physicians are obliged to do, not only in pursuit of knowledge, and for their improvement, but for their employment and support; the states here, unlike our luxurious cities, being unable to maintain a settled physician. It is hard to say, whether he has most advanced the knowledge or the usefulness of physic, by introducing a practice, which was not common before his time, of constantly visiting the sick in their beds; by which careful attendance to the whole course of the distemper, he has not only been able to give a timely assistance against every inconvenient or dangerous accident, but is become superior to all other physicians in the knowledge of diseases, and in foretelling their events. From this practice he has got the name of a Clinic physician. Nor is he less indebted to nature for a sound understanding, than to fortune and his own industry for these uncommon opportunities of improving it. No wonder therefore, that he soon found himself at the head of his contemporary practitioners.

But this glory was too little for HIPPOCRATES; he saw with regret, that part of his province was invaded by the philosophers; and resolved to take it out of their hands. With this view he applied himself to HERACLITUS of Ephesus, to GORGIAS the Sophist, and DEMOCRITUS of Abdera. Of them he not only learned the reasons and foundations of his practice, but was also enabled to write with method and elegance; which has justly gained him the reputation of being the first, who collected the scattered precepts of physic into an art, and delivered them in a clear and eloquent manner. He has taken great pains to secure to the physicians so much of the study of nature, as they are concerned with, distinct from the other parts of philosophy, and has in all probability separated the two professions for ever. If his philosophy makes him far superior to the common practicers of physic, his practice makes him no less excel the speculative students of it. On the one hand he is preserved from the useless refinements of theorists, as on the other from the gross errors and superstitions of vulgar empirics; both which my friend, with his usual candour, acknowledges, that he frequently rallies with great good sense; telling the speculative philosophers, that "their visionary enquiries about the principles and formation of the human body would be of as much use to a painter in drawing its form, as to a physician in curing its diseases:" And as for the empirics, upon occasion of their calling the epilepsy a sacred distemper, he says, "that this was first consecrated by them, in order that its divinity might be an asylum for their ignorance and inability to cure it; since it gave them a pretence to attack it with charms and expiations; and, if these did not succeed, the gods only were to be blamed." My philosophical acquaintance assures me, that this is the true merit of HIPPOCRATES; and that, for all beyond it, he is indebted to the common

vanity in disciples of magnifying their master, and to that humour of mankind, which will not let them sit down contented with any thing moderate. He frequently expresses his apprehensions, that the extravagant character, which some have given him, may do a great deal of mischief, if it makes men rest in what he has done, and refer every thing to his authority. For though (my friend continued) he is somewhere so sanguine as to assert, that the whole of physic is now found out; yet in reality the art is but still in its infancy, and this great man has only begun, what cannot be perfected without the accurate observations of many ages. In particular, he is not master of a sufficient number of simples for all the various purposes of physic; and does not perhaps fully understand the true uses and qualities of those he has; for too much stress seems to be laid on some ineffectual ones, while others more violent in their effects are used with too little caution. The study of anatomy is still less advanced; all that is known of it is derived, either comparatively from the animals that are sacrificed, or from the Ægyptian embalmers of human bodies; and I much doubt, whether HIPPOCRATES ever saw a human body dissected. However, he has endeavoured to supply, from fancy and conjecture, his imperfect knowledge of the structure and true use of the parts; but, as is usual, where this is done, his accounts are generally improbable, often ridiculous and inconsistent. He has farther often lamented to me, when I have thrown this subject in his way, that HIPPOCRATES has endeavoured to dazzle the world with a specious shew of knowledge, where there is great reason to believe, that he is wholly ignorant, in attempting to unfold the causes and hidden nature of distempers; “ which, said my friend, he had much better have let alone, and confined himself to (what is the only valuable part of his works) a faithful history of diseases, though even here he is justly suspected

of asserting more than he was ever authorized from observation and experience; as when he says, that forty times seven days have a peculiar influence over the birth of a child; that distempers kill men chiefly on the odd day; and that the remarkable struggles of nature towards a crisis are regulated by the number seven; all which his disciples firmly believe, though the more knowing look upon it as a fantastical application of PYTHAGORAS's mystic philosophy. In other matters he has been too hasty in forming his axioms, and in reducing to a certain rule things depending on too many circumstances, to be fixed by the observations of one man, if not too uncertain to be ever fixed at all."

Indeed I could not help thinking myself, that the common stories, which are told of him, are very idle; and that there is nothing so miraculous in this great physician, when I amused myself one day, since his works have been in my house for you, in computing, how many patients he saved out of those, whose histories he gives in his Epidemics; for it appears, that out of forty-two, only seventeen escaped. Do not wonder at his mentioning, as I find he does, such food, as the flesh of asses, horses, dogs and foxes; for these are eaten without any scruple in Greece. Among the many stories, I cannot help mentioning to thee one, which is often told as an instance of his extraordinary sagacity. He was sent for to PERDICCAS, the present king of Macedonia, who languished under a sort of consumption that was attended with uncommon symptoms. HIPPOCRATES observed his patient change colour, and suffer much disorder, whenever PHILA, the late king's mistress, entered the chamber. Upon which he immediately found out and discovered to PHILA, that a passion for her was the true cause of his illness. The love-sick prince was treated ac-

cordingly, and the success verified our physician's judgment. I dare say, thou wilt smile at the romantic air of this relation, and think with me, that if the dexterous management of such an affair was the proper test of a physician, the old chief eunuch BAGOAS would have a much fairer title to be reputed one, than HIPPOCRATES. As to morality, his reputation is very high: he is superior to a love of money, and freely communicates his art for the relief of the necessitous and strangers. Persia is well acquainted with the love he bears his country, which made him prefer the life of a wanderer to the dignity of that exalted station, which thou so deservedly enjoyest. For which, and his many eminent services, he has been made free of Athens, and initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries; and a maintenance in the Prytaneum, at the publick charge, is decreed to him and his posterity. The oath, which he enjoins his followers before he teaches them his art, must give thee a great opinion of his strict integrity; it forbids them to procure abortions, to administer poison, to make ill use of the free access they have to houses, or betray the confidence reposed in them. All which he insists upon their swearing to observe by APOLLO, ÆSCULAPIUS, HYGEIA, PANACEA, and all the other gods and goddesses; and that they may so prosper in their profession, as they keep this oath. However he has given offence to some grave men by a rule of health, which he delivers, that a man ought to drink twice a month to some excess. It were to be wished, that he could as easily answer a worse crime that he is charged with, in relation to a young slave, who danced and sung at the theatre. She was a great favourite of the public, and brought her mistress in very considerable sums of money; for the Athenians set so high a value on these accomplishments, that the celebrated performers not only make a part at all great feasts, but even a select com-

pany * of philosophers will break off their conversation on the most important points to attend to these diversions. The mistress of this famous dancer one day made a discovery of her being pregnant, and was very uneasy to think that all her gain would soon be over, if this was suffered to go on. She therefore applied to HIPPOCRATES, who owns, that at her request he procured an abortion, though in direct contradiction to his oath. I remember likewise to have heard him accused of setting fire to ÆSCULAPIUS's temple at Cos, and the library at Cnidus, after he had transcribed their registers; but these are generally looked upon as groundless calumnies.

May the lights, which thou receivest from this celebrated Coan, enable thee to fulfil the ardent wishes of Persia, that ARTAXERXES may live for ever.

F.

* Xenoph. Sympos.

L E T T E R CXXXVII.

CLEANDER to HIPPIAS.

THOU seemest to have been transported beyond the bounds of humanity in thy last letter; for the virgins of Attica should by no means be involved in the same censure with those of Ephesus. Think not that I despise thy friendly caution, or the passion of HELIODORUS. But let me recommend it to thee as a circumstance of high entertainment, that CLEANDER, who was educated in the severer studies of philosophy, and has conversed entirely with statesmen and merchants, should zealously vindicate the character, and court the company of the fair sex. Such is the alteration which time has made in me, and the nature of my employment.

I was yesterday in an assembly of Athenian matrons at the house of ASPASIA, with whom I have cultivated a correspondence ever since my introduction to PERICLES. She has continually received me with the most engaging condescension, and abounds in so many elegant turns of wit, and in such a variety of good knowledge and good sense, that no one here is either equal or superior to her, except the great SOCRATES. As soon as the performers on the lute and harp were retired, with most of the persons who were invited, we drew together into a circle, and ASPASIA led the conversation. She amused us with some curious anecdotes of PERICLES, (for whose memory she expressed the

tenderest regard,) and entered into large dissertations on several subjects. At last she applied to me, and began to ask me concerning the manners of the ladies in those parts of the world, where I had travelled. "I conjecture, said she, from the treatment which the women have met with in almost all states, it must have been the opinion of philosophers and legislators, "that they have no souls." Else why are they not admitted into the greater mysteries? and why are they denied the improvements of letters and the politer arts? In Athens, however, we are allowed more privileges than in many places, and are used like rational creatures. But tell me, CLEANDER, the result of your observations on the sex, and the different lights, in which it appears through the mediums of different laws, prejudices, and fashions. Perhaps you have not turned your thoughts this way, since I know the men have a contempt for our understandings, and forget, that such a disparity arises from the acquirements of education, not the natural capacity." "It is impossible, answered I, for any one to forget so clear a truth, and have seen the excellent ASPASIA. The liberty indulged to the ladies in this city is adapted to answer all the good purposes of the promiscuous conversation in Ionia, (particularly in Ephesus, the chief residence of luxury;) and their own sense more effectually restrains them from the wantonness so justly imputed to that country, than the bolts and bars of the east. Here alone they are not slaves to their husbands or their pleasures." "You are a little severe, replied she, on your native place; yet I am convinced, that what you say is founded on fact. And, for my own part, I have often considered the pompous worship and temple of the DIANA of Ephesus, as presenting a very lively emblem of the genius of that city. Both are fitter for the Cyprian VENUS, than for her, who is revered as the guardian

Deity of groves and mountains." "The romantic analogy you have discovered, continued I, between the effeminacy and the religion of Ephesus, is prettily conceived. But the speculation, I was running into, is of a more abstruse kind; and I would repeat, *ASPASIA*, with your leave, the remarks I have made as to the influence of various states on the manners of the ladies." "I am all attention," said she, with singular politeness.

"Then, said I, to speak in the language of a politician to a great mistress of politics, an arbitrary constitution of government must always take away the rights and intercourse of personal friendship among both sexes, and make itself be felt in the innocent amusements of private life, as well as the management of public business. Nor can I think, that this altogether proceeds from the suspicious nature of those governments, but from every man's desire to imitate in his domestic œconomy that example, which is set in the political. Hence it is, that a single national tyrant makes many family ones; and when the body of a nation becomes inured to despotic sway, the sentiments, that favour it, find the readiest admission. Notwithstanding the absurdity of them, they are embraced as sound principles, and insensibly make their way, through the deluded understanding, into the temper and the manners of that people. If the great monarch of the country imprisons a subject, or deprives him of his estate and honours, without assigning a reason or producing an accusation, the little monarch imagines himself warranted in the licentious exercise of this prerogative within the limits of his own house. If the same monarch forbids a freedom of speech with respect to his person and administration; his petty imitator, jealous of the least infringement on the authority of a parent or an husband, watches every unguarded expression, that may drop from his children, and

excludes his wives from all conversation, lest they should be guilty of treachery, or enamoured of a stranger. Surrounded thus by eunuchs and mutes, denied every advantage, that contributes to raise or refine the understanding, let us suppose some distinguished beauty (for with the Persians beauty alone is regarded in the women) to be taken into the bosom and confidence of a mighty prince. Let us suppose her to interfere in state-affairs, though she be ignorant of mankind, and the true interest of the kingdom. The natural effect of it must be, that the caprice of the mistress added to the caprice of the prince, while each is to be gratified without controul, will redouble the miseries of a country. Such events have often been seen in arbitrary constitutions of government. What makes the thing so high an absurdity in Persia, is not only the confined and uninforming education of the women, but its contradiction to the sense of our ancestors, who thought the females not qualified for business, and by the laws they settled, have rendered the male heirs alone capable of succeeding to the throne. In this the empire of CYRUS has varied from the Assyrian empire, whose history is chiefly remarkable for the character of queen SEMIRAMIS." Methinks, returned ASPASIA, the Persian ladies form a very good contrast to those of * Ægypt, who, as we are told, drive bargains, go to market and manage the plough, while the men sit at home with the distaff and spindle, performing the more sedentary offices, which are esteemed here the natural province of the housewife. We have none in Greece that resemble them. "No, said I, unless you will match them with the military ladies of Sparta, who are equally the reverse of the Persian. Inured to the same exercises, the same hardships, and the same discipline with the men, they differ not in their manners. It was the intention of their

* Vide Herod. L. II.

great lawgiver to subdue the passions, by methods opposite to what are used in Persia. And as in this last country, they endeavour to restrain the women by debarring them from the sight of the human species, and by the confinement of the body; in the former, a perpetual familiarity with the men blunts the edge of irregular appetites, while the check that is laid on sensuality, I mean, that sense of honour, which is instilled early, has a reference to the mind only. The worst of it is, that the rough genius of the commonwealth gives an unnatural boldness and fierceness to the sex, which the introduction of foreign commerce into the state would soon polish. And, in this respect, I take it, *ASPASIA*, Athens has a manifest superiority. Free and independent as Sparta, able to defend its liberties in the field against the most numerous or warlike people, it carefully attends to the encouragement of commerce, and brings home the wealth of the most distant climates to its own convenience and emolument. At the same time such are its laws, and such are its citizens, that as the one appears to be very wisely calculated to prevent the growth of that enervating luxury, which is usually the companion of trade; so the other, persuaded of the needfulness of simplicity to support the dignity of Athens, concur with cheerfulness in receiving and obeying them. Under restrictions of this nature, accurately observed, what happiness is not derived by commerce on every individual, as well as on the republic? Every man has some employment, to which he is not only induced by inclination, but by the severity of the law. For here, if I mistake not, idleness is punished with death. On these accounts the fretful jealousies, which disturb and imbitter private life in the less active countries, are entirely unknown to the Athenians. The women are bred up in those arts, which become them; are indulged on solemn festivals in frequenting the theatre; and are admitted into a great share of the domestic management.

By such means, they gain an agreeable softness in their behaviour without a false delicacy, and a liberal way of thinking, which the men hardly arrive at in arbitrary governments."

"But, interposed ASPASIA smiling, notwithstanding the advantageous circumstances of the Grecian ladies, I believe you are as zealous against permitting them to deal in politics, as you were a little while since, against conceding that privilege to the favourites of Persian monarchs." "Such a privilege, replied I, is to be granted only to extraordinary geniusses; and when limited to these, you will admit, ASPASIA, there is no danger of its being indulged, either frequently, or improperly. However, your observation is certainly very pertinent, that there is not the same absurdity in making a woman of parts, thus educated, the first minister in the state, as in raising the ignorant beauties of Persia to an high degree of confidence." "You know the light, returned she, in which I was formerly placed, when the ambition of my youth prompted me to aim at being admired and beloved by PERICLES. I was then traduced as a designing politic intriguer; and the fine understanding of that great man was strangely depreciated, in being represented as a dupe to the artifice of a woman. But I had a mind to know your sentiments, and agree with them. You had something else to say; I am afraid I have interrupted you. "I can have nothing to say, answered I, when you have any thing to offer." "You have lost sight of Ephesus, said she." "'Tis true, said I, and I was going to shew from the very constitution of Ephesus, (which has one of the noblest harbours in the world, and therefore is a place of the most extensive trade) that a greater freedom of course must be indulged there to luxury and the manners of the women, than either in Persia or in Athens. For though that place was among the immediate

dependencies of an arbitrary government, and (notwithstanding the article in CIMON's peace) is still under the awe of it, it has always been allowed in several immunities, and comparatively with the rest of the empire in a relaxation of absolute authority, with a view to encourage commerce, which can never flourish under the rigour of it. This has brought the inhabitants to converse more openly, and both sexes meet together at the public fairs and at sumptuous entertainments. Thus the education of the women becomes free and uncontrouled, which sufficiently distinguishes them from those of Persia. Should you then ask, why they differ from the Athenian women? That too may be solved without difficulty. For though in Athens it may be necessary for the preservation of its liberties, to enact laws restraining prodigality and wantonness; yet those laws are not wished for in Ephesus, where they would be unwilling even to establish freedom at the expence of their pleasures; so that while the Ephesians share all the advantages of commerce, they are subject to the evils of unbounded luxury. Agreeably to this, the women affect a gaiety in their dress, a spirit in the very air of their countenance, and a libertine deportment unpractised by any other people. They love to be followed by the men, and expect an homage, that bespeaks adoration, not esteem. The consequence of it is, that they, who set a value upon their persons, (and indeed, there are few who do not) have an aversion to an husband; and the city owes its populousness, not so much to the intermarriages of its inhabitants, as to the concourse of strangers. I knew a lady of this turn of mind, who refused an * Ephesian of uncommon parts and sense, from a ridiculous caprice. Such an one amongst you, ASPASIA, would have been deservedly infamous. For in Athens matrimony is held honourable and highly encouraged.

* See Letter CXXXV.

Hence an Athenian matron is beloved and respected, when old. As she has been diligent in the education of her family, she looks back on her past life with pleasure, and has a prospect in her children, which contributes to prolong her happiness. An Ephesian beauty, when the charms of her person wear off, and with them she lays aside the luxury of dress, incapable of resorting for consolation to the solid pleasures of domestic life, loses her former cheerfulness, and spends the rest of her days in the low arts of detracting from the young and handsome." "In truth, CLEANDER, returned ASPASIA, the Athenian lady is very much obliged to you for the preference you have given her over all others. You seem to think, she has every good quality of the Spartan, Ephesian, and Persian, without any of their foibles." "Most evidently, said I, for she has the manly sense of the Spartan, without her rough severity; the sprightly ease of the Ephesian, without her lasciviousness; and the modest reserve of the Persian, without her slavish recluseness."

I flatter myself, dearest HIPPIAS, thou wilt be reconciled to the virgins of Attica on the reading of this letter; and believe them for the future to be the choicest blessings of OROMASDES, not the baneful gifts of ARIMANIUS.

C.

L E T T E R CXXXVIII.

AMORGES TO CLEANDER. From Pedasa.

THE intelligence you sent me of ZOPYRUS's designs against CAUNUS, was so long delayed by contrary winds and other accidents, before it reached my hands, that I had not time to take all the necessary precautions for the security of my government. The province was unfurnished of the best part of the troops, which are usually quartered in it, they having been ordered away to the general rendezvous at Sardis; and the citizens of CAUNUS obstinately insisting upon their privilege of receiving no Persian garrison, I found myself without a force sufficient to compel them to it, and could only exhort them by letters to preserve their allegiance to the king, and write to the satraps of the neighbouring provinces for assistance. In the mean time, ZOPYRUS with his ships came before the town, and sent in a message to the inhabitants, with offers of the most advantageous conditions, if they would surrender themselves into his hands. The Caunians after consultation returned for answer, that though they should be willing to deliver up their city to one of his noble birth and excellent qualities, they could by no means give admittance to his followers. ZOPYRUS little expecting this reply, landed his men, and began the assault in form. The inhabitants made

a very gallant defence; and ZOPYRUS himself was killed by ALCIDAS, a native of the place, in attempting to scale the walls. Upon which his troops retired in disorder to their ships, and within a few hours sailed away. The day after this action, I arrived myself with a thousand foot and three hundred horse, whom I had found means to draw together. The Caunians opened their gates to me without resistance. I reprimanded them for their former refusal to admit a garrison; telling them, I expected them to deliver up to me those who had advised that measure, as well as those who corresponded with the enemy, under pain of forfeiting their privileges. The terror of arms, CLEANDER, is a most excellent monitor. My demands were complied with, and I returned to this place with my prisoners, whose examinations I have sent up to court, and expect the king's further pleasure concerning them. THERON, the Rhodian, CRATIPPUS's brother, (who for some years has been settled here) contributed not a little, by his persuasions and example, towards the brave resistance made to these piratical adventurers, and was very instrumental in helping to discover some, who had been concerned in practices with them.

I am told, my enemies at court have insinuated, that I was indirectly concerned in this attempt, and had given ZOPYRUS secret assurances of joining him, in case he met with success. May I share the fate of the cursed *ARIMANIUS, when the seven thousand years have finished their course, if the nature of the facts, as well as my own con-

* The Persians believed, that the lower world should be in subjection to ARIMANIUS for seven thousand years, after which order should be restored, and OROMASDES reign without opposition. Vide Hyde de Religione veterum Persarum.

science, does not acquit me. Can it be alledged with any colour of reason, that I ought to have hazarded the king's authority, or perhaps driven the Caunians into an open revolt, by attempting to force a garrison upon them, before the reinforcements, which I expected, arrived? Or will it be said, that I omitted one step, which the weakness of the province suffered me to take, that was proper to secure its tranquillity?

I desire nothing but justice in this affair: I am convinced, I shall meet with it before the tribunal of ARTAXERXES; and to that I willingly submit my life, my reputation, and my fortunes. Adieu.

P.

L E T T E R CXXXIX.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

WHEN my zeal for the purity and prevalence of the Magian scheme of religion is alarmed, I am almost transported into an unbecoming violence. But † when I reflect on thee and thy friendship, the softer passions take place, which draw me back to sentiments of moderation and peace. Dost thou ask what incident has raised my zeal? Know, CLEANDER, that in the spacious grove adjoining to the palace of ARSACES in the forest of Nyssa, some concealed Sabians have erected a marble altar; and, under the protection of that false satrap, have in the night time performed their horrid incantations. Not long since they were discovered by some true worshippers in the celebration of a ceremony peculiar to them, that of boiling the kid in the mother's milk; by which they impiously and impertinently invite the superior intelligences of the stars to reside in their images. Thou knowest the summary course of our proceedings: they were seized, convicted before the archimage, and delivered over to the curses of AHRIMAN, and the torments of the avenging angels.

† SMERDIS seems to entertain the good-natured opinion of ANTONINUS, "that we ought to think over the virtues and excellencies of our several acquaintance, when we have a mind to indulge ourselves, and be chearful." Anton. Medit. L. VI. p. 56. Edit. Lond. 1697. Note by the translator.

Believe me, the state of Median piety affects me with indignation and sorrow! This sect has of late gained ground upon us in several parts of the east; and though the abilities of our prophet once defeated the industry of it, inasmuch that the holy flame glowed in all minds, as well as burnt on the shrines of all Persia; yet we have been since returning to the senseless rites he taught us to disdain. I observe at the same time, with the highest satisfaction, the attachment of our monarch to the doctrines of the Zenda; (and the only hopes of the magi are centered there:.) but neither the encouragement he has vouchsafed to the Jews, whose practices are directly opposite to Sabianism, and who worship in their temples by continual fire; nor the arms he gives us to destroy the wicked; neither the lenity nor severity of the government, can secure us from the wiles of falsehood; neither arguments nor power. Thou wilt here be apt to object, perverted by the reasonings of thy Grecian friends, "Would it not be better to allow an intercommunity of religions? Such an exertion of the legal authority, as that which you have mentioned, can only lop the branches; but who will tear up the root? You may cut off the excrescences; but who can cleanse the ill humours that produce them? You may close the wound for a season; but will it not open with the first disorder?" All this is true, and it might perhaps be worthy the wisdom of the good being, to send a genius like ZOROASTER upon earth, in every generation of men, to preserve the knowledge and worship of him in its full purity. In the mean time we his followers must use force, while we are without inspiration; we must not accept the precarious submission of the understanding, while the reason is weak, the heart depraved; we must prevent this danger by the means we have, and not wait for those we have not.

“ Seeft thou, fays the prophet in his facred volume, a fhip putting out to fea in a ftorm; and wouldeft thou not conftain the owner of it, to keep in harbour, left it dafh againft the rocks, and be loft? Seeft thou a man travelling into a far country, and, inftead of preferring the fafe and beaten path, taking his way through barren heaths, burning fands, expofed 'to the fury of wild beafts, and the flings of fcorpions; wouldeft thou not force him to be ruled by thee?” Again, “ Seeft thou another preparing to throw himfelf from a fharp point on one of the mountains of Caucasus; and wouldeft thou not lay thine hands on the wretch, left he bring mifchief on himfelf? Even fo let it be to every finner, who departeth from the truth to do evil.”

This being the opinion of the book, I own, many are the doubts, which have arifen in my mind concerning thy refidence among the idolaters of the weft. If I have fometimes been afraid, left the profane difputations of fophifts fully thy unspotted faith, I have recollected, that the fame prophet, who commands us to avoid every pollution of the elements, which are the feeds of all things, commands us to avoid every pollution of the foul, which contains the feeds of reafon, immortality, and happinefs. Then have I wifhed thee to fly away from that detefted country on the wings of the morning, that thou mighteft no more be liable to fufpicion. If at other times I have thought thee too firm to be fhaken from the genuine principles of ZOROASTER's law, I have recollected, that the fame prophet, who exhorts us, whatever temptations we combat, to hold faft to the religion of OROMADES, and to fuffer our minds to afcend from earth to heaven, as the fun mounts above the level of the waters to the zenith, whence he emits his warmeft and

most enlivening rays ; exhorts us likewise, for want of power, by reproof and by instruction, to persuade those, who are defiled with error, to forsake it ; on the same principle, that thou wouldest compassionately free the prisoner from the captivity, which sooths him, for it may speedily end in his destruction.

I conjure thee, hide not the profession of our law ; gird up thy loins with the holy girdle ; let me not be told again of thy private expiations, to appease the prophet for what thou softly callest the necessary omissions of duty, but are in truth the shameful compliances of fear. Address thyself to the philosophers and magistrates of Athens : let them bow no longer to idol-Gods and idol-passions, but adopt the Deity and the morals of ZCROASTER. Think on the example proposed to thee by that great man, who looking on death with contempt, when set against the establishment of his doctrines in the hearts of others, not only hazarded, but lost his life, in endeavouring to convert ARGASP, king of the Scythians. Be thou comforted also in remembering the speedy vengeance inflicted on that stubborn prince by DARIUS. Such may be the fate of Athens from the pious ARTAXERXES, if she refuse to hear thy mission, and treat thee with a Scythian barbarity. But if, as is most probable, in a state renowned for letters and for wit, her philosophers attempt to confute, and her poets to ridicule thee ; be assured, as the sacred fire on our altars is smothered for a time by the shrubs and flowers that are thrown upon it, yet is nevertheless raised and supported by them ; so is it with truth, which makes every impediment in its way the proper matter for itself to work upon, and converts the means intended for its overthrow, into those of its credit and propagation.

L E T T E R CXL.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

ALCIBIADES came yesterday on a visit to PHILEMON and myself, and we had a private symposium. He had scarce entered the apartment, when he laughed, and said, "I have just been present at the deliberations of an ingenious assembly, into which I am lately admitted." I warrant you, interrupted I, some party of pleasure. You have perhaps been contriving some conceit or scheme to take place at the approaching Orgies. "No," answered he; by HERCULES, you were never more mistaken." Then you have been discoursing, returned I, with a knot of sophists or philosophers. "Why in truth, replied he, it was so grave a meeting, that you would have imagined, had you looked at us, it was a company of philosophers; and yet our conference was so void of all meaning, that it might vie with the disputations of a sophist. To hold you no longer in suspense, a set of young citizens, who are fond of attending the debates of the people, and have a mind to make themselves, not able statesmen, but popular orators, have composed a society, where, in imitation of the great objects of SOCRATES's ridicule, they talk extempore on every topic, that is offered them." "I perceive, interposed PHILEMON, there is a great spirit of eloquence gone forth into the world; and the forum (it is now suggested) was

not designed so much for the transaction of business, as for a vain ostentation of the capacity. If MINERVA, the tutelar Goddess of Athens, inspires not our posterity with better thoughts, the affairs of the senate and assembly may degenerate into careless amusements. These trifles lead to serious * misfortunes. "Pray, said I, who are the rulers of your club?" Not I, answered ALCIBIADES, though a member of it. "I take that for granted, returned I; and it is impossible for any one but a sophist, to be either the framer or conductor of it. You are in the right, replied he: THEON and ISAGORAS, who are of that sect, both of them superior to us in years, seem to be our chief demagogues and managers. The one was a follower of HIPPIAS, and imitates him in conciseness, which he looks upon as a proof of genius, (though, you know, it may discover either great strength or poverty of parts :) the other was a scholar of GORGIAS, and values himself on a florid copiousness. The former is of so ridiculous an aspect, that he would make a droll figure in the paintings of PYRIECUS; and the latter is a man of such universal attainments, that he presum-

* PHILEMON seems to have been of the same sentiments with CICERO, who puts these words into the mouth of the elder CATO in the piece de Senectute. "*Quod si legere aut audire voletis externa, maximas respublicas ab adolescentibus labefactatas reperietis.*"

Ceod, qui vestram rempublicam tantam amissis tam cito? sic enim percontanti, ut est in Nævii Poetæ ludo, respondentur et alia, et hæc in primis,

Proveniebant Oratores novi, stultuli, adolescentuli.

It is remarkable, that ALCIBIADES should have this conversation with PHILEMON, who foresaw the ruin, that would be brought upon the state by the precipitate advice and measures of such citizens as that young Athenian. He engaged his countrymen afterwards in the fatal expedition to Sicily. Should it be asked, how one of so romantic and debauched a turn could maintain any correspondence with the grave PHILEMON, it may be said, he did like CATILINE, *bonos sibi specie quâdam virtutis assimilata tenere.* Note by the Translator.

ed to contend in tragedy with EURIPIDES himself. They have so high a regard for the improvements of their pupils, that they always take contrary sides, and frequently keep the conversation to themselves. As soon as THEON has uttered two or three sentences with some difficulty and much formality, the forward ISAGORAS lays hold of them, allows him the whole extent of his argument, but perhaps thinks it not to the purpose; and after he has proceeded in his usual strain of declamation, the same sentiments pursued in different words, and warmly argued, furnish out the exercise of the day.”

“ But said I, though your disputes are not carried on in the best manner, you keep yourselves in breath, I imagine, by treating subjects of importance as a trial of your invention.” “ Yes, rejoined ALCIBIADES; we have talked over every character in * HOMER from ACHILLES to THERSITES; and have started it as a problem of difficult solution, whether NESTOR or ULYSSES was the wisest? A friend of mine, who had been in Ithaca accidentally, (where hardly any body else ever was,) valued himself much upon it, and told us, “ he might perhaps be prejudiced in favour of one, whom he had proposed as the pattern of his travels; but he could not help thinking, when he traversed the rocky island, which was the royal patrimony of the hero, that the good effects of his government existed visibly in the face of the country till now.” He concluded with some smart reflections or strong things to the disadvantage of old NESTOR. Such, CLEANDER, are the means, by

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* The sophists were fond of extracting topics of declamation from the poets, especially from HOMER, as may be collected from the Dialogues of PLATO. It is said in one of them, that HIPPIAS of Elis had thrown all the precepts necessary for instituting youth into an oration, and called it “ NESTOR’S advice to a Son.”

which many of the Athenians have learnt a vicious fluency of words, and a petulant vivacity. But we begin to be tired of antiquity, and are descended to the worst of all modern productions, the regulations of our own society." "One should apprehend, answered I, they must be wretched subjects of discourse. The flowers of eloquence can never flourish or be raised on barren soils" "True, said he; yet you know there is art required in glossing over a statute or old order of the assembly; and the fate of a question will now and then depend on a defect in the way of drawing it, or in the form of proceeding to consider it. We train ourselves therefore to a qualification so material to the interests of the republic." "But, continued I, this might be an improving exercise, if you would resolve to digest in your minds the matter of a curious subject, which would admit some difference of opinion concerning it, before the day of debate. As to the expressions, the less they are premeditated, methinks the better." "I agree with you, returned ALCIBIADES, and had once the boldness to move what you mention. I believe it is almost the only time I ever troubled them with my thoughts at all. For I have learnt from SOCRATES, not to talk of any thing, before I have considered it; so that in this society I generally entertain myself with the wisdom of others, and observe a more than Pythagoric silence. It was said, in objection to it, that the very end of the meeting would be destroyed, which was "to speak without thinking." "A noble institution, cried PHILEMON; these men would ill imitate your uncle PERICLES, whose excellent talents, as an orator, were formed, not by an idle loquacity, but by long application to philosophy, joined to great natural quickness and comprehension of parts. Words are only the instruments to convey our thoughts; and

you might as well flatter yourself to become a painter at once, by taking a pencil into your hand, as a master of eloquence, by gaining a readiness of speech." "You may remember, said ALCIBIADES, that THUCYDIDES, who succeeded CIMON in the opposite interest to PERICLES, founded a sort of political lecture, and paid some sophist very largely for his assiduity in teaching that science to the young Athenians. What would you say now (since you seem to think we want good materials for debating) if the two institutions were joined together; and the disciples of this last, after a certain time, delivered to the care of THEON and ISAGORAS, that they might produce in the society, for the encouragement of eloquence, those abilities they had acquired in the school of politics?" "Forgive me, replied he, if I cannot be pleasant on a matter of such lasting consequence. For I take this faculty of discoursing on both sides of a question, which the sophists are fond of exerting themselves and communicating to others, not to be so hurtful to science, as dangerous to virtue. It tempts us to lay aside sincerity, and to varnish over falsehood; it introduces something of the drama, into public councils, and familiarizes our youth to the acting a part."

C.

L E T T E R C X L I.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Taoces on the borders
of the Persian gulf.

IN the leisure of a few months recess from the court, I want no inducement, CLEANDER, to resume my correspondence with thee. From the opinion thou hast formed of me, thou wilt readily conceive, how great a relief I find in this retirement from the hurry and dissipation of a public life. Taoces (for that is the name of this place from the neighbouring promontory) was an ancient pleasure-seat of the Achæmenian princes, the ancestors of CYRUS, but has since past by grant into the family of PARMYS. The pleasantness of the place is greatly owing to its maritime situation, and to the natural variety of its woodlands, lawns, and water; though very considerable improvements have been made by large plantations in the paradises, that encompass it. Nor is the beauty of its prospects diminished from the contrast of a more barren and mountainous country, viewed at a distance, towards the borders of Carmania. Above Taoces, about two hundred stadia upon the river Granis, which at this place falls into the Persian gulf, stands Gabæ, one of the royal palaces, as Pasargada was the other, between which the kings of Persia in former times resided; for the champain country about these places recommended their situation to our an-

cient monarchs, whose pleasures consisted in manly exercises, and whose chief diversion was the chase. In those days all the youth of Persia, educated after the discipline of our ancient schools, were called upon in their turns to attend their sovereign to the field; not indeed so often against the human kind, as in the pursuit of savage animals, with which they were frequently exposed to no less hazardous encounters, and by this means properly trained to all the stratagems and toils of war. They then pursued the game on foot, and contended in speed with the swiftest animals; for till the times of CYRUS a horse was little known in Persia. Pasargada is situated upon the river Agradatus, now more commonly called after the name of our immortal CYRUS. The course of it is through the vale of Persis, the middle and most fruitful part of the country. CYRUS, even after he had begun the most magnificent palace of the east, still retained a particular fondness for that place. There past the closing scene of his glorious life; and in the gardens belonging to that ancient seat of his ancestors, he ordered, that his remains should be deposited. His sepulchre is plain and simple, distinguished only by an obelisk, which stands in the centre of a thick wood. Within the palace of Pasargada are the courts of justice, and the ancient schools; the former supplied by the itinerant judges, who are sent annually through all the provinces; the latter now under the direction of the Magi. But they, CLEANDER, are more industrious to maintain the reputation, and promote the speculative studies of their own order, than to see the spirit of the ancient disciple preserved in its full vigor. Pasargada is now become one of the most considerable colleges of their profession; another settlement they had in a village near adjacent, which bore the name of Ecbatana, till DARIUS obliged them to remove from thence, and built the town of that name upon the mountains. The court is this spring

at Persopolis, from whence the great king is expected to make a progress to Pasargada. Except in these progresses, the concourse and splendour of a Persian court is seldom seen there; yet, without that, even in these remote corners of Persia, frequent opportunities offer of mixing in a very polite and various society. The voyages of the Phœnicians have of late ages, thou knowest, opened a commerce of literature between the most distant climates of the east and west; which has occasioned a great resort of strangers, especially of the Grecian sophists, into these parts; for they, whose researches after knowledge carry them even to the Indian Brachmans, will not fail to visit the schools of the Magi. The situation of my Persian villa puts me sometimes in the way of these learned guests; they are generally introduced to me by the courteous Mage TEASPES who obliges PARMYS and me with his company in this agreeable retirement. The adjacent promontory of Taoces affords a commodious harbour to the Tyrian merchants. Among them I often meet with men of a large mind, and improved understanding; such as I have heard thy brother HIPPIAS described to me by the great men, who have seen him at the court of Ecbatana.

I have long entertained an opinion, that there was a nearer consanguinity between the distant nations of the earth, than they themselves are generally apprized of. My happening, upon some occasion, to suggest this hint in a mixt company of Greeks and Asiatics, who were met not long since at Taoces, brought on a conversation, that has a good deal confirmed me in these sentiments. PYTHON, the Athenian agent, who, being in these parts upon his mercantile affairs, chanced to be one of the company, said with some earnestness, that though, in the relation he stood to a certain state, he should be unwilling to give up a point so interesting to many of the Greeks, as that of

their being the *Αὐτίχθονες* of their native country; yet he should with pleasure attend to any discoveries of a natural alliance between them and the subjects of the great king. "I fear, said TEASPES, you must first relinquish those boasted pretensions of your Grecian friends, before any such relation between them and these eastern nations can be made out? IROMUS, a Phœnician merchant, who sat by, was disposed to treat the subject with raillery, and acknowledged, that considering the barbarous state of ancient Greece, before CADMUS introduced humanity among its early inhabitants, he saw nothing extravagant in the pretensions of those Greeks, who make their first ancestors the spontaneous product of the earth." It must be owned, replied PYTHON, that there is a great mixture of fable in the early periods of the Grecian history. But will not the same objection lie to the history of all other nations, if you attempt to trace them up to their first original? Thus, if INACHUS be stiled the offspring of OCEANUS and TETHYS, this carries his antiquity to that height, as to leave it uncertain, who were his progenitors. And is not SEMIRAMIS, in like manner, reported to be the daughter of the Syrian Goddeſs?" "I have had, said TEASPES, several opportunities of conversing intimately with the priests of Byblos, who, you will allow, deserve to be consulted in points of the earliest antiquity; and I can with confidence affirm, that of the antiquities of the Greeks, till the æra of the Olympiads, there is very little certainty to be collected from any traditions or monuments, that have been preserved by their own historians. I must so far, however, dissent from IROMUS as to believe, that there were distinct communities and forms of government established by the Pelasgi, before the coming of CADMUS into Greece. Phœnicia had sent colonies thither long before that which he settled at Thebes in Bœotia. The very name of INACHUS, who is the reputed founder of

the Argive kingdom, betrays his Phœnician original; and PHORONEUS bears an affinity to an Ægyptian name. It was under his government, that the scattered families of the Pelasgi were brought to unite themselves in a regular society with the new transplanted colonies, who followed PHORONEUS into that country soon after the expulsion of the Phœnicians out of Ægypt." "You must allow then, interposed PYTHON, that the Pelasgi themselves were more ancient in Greece, than the colonies you speak of." "Some indeed, replied TEASPES, must have got sooner there than the rest; and I use the word, Pelasgi, because upon the authority of the Greeks themselves, I find no name more ancient for the first inhabitants of that country. But you cannot be ignorant, I suppose, that the name of Pelasgi could only belong to a people, who had passed the sea, and sufficiently destroys the high pretensions of your countrymen, of being coeval almost with the territory itself. And here I cannot help repeating your own fabulous account of INACHUS, under which seems to be disguised some historical tradition, when 'tis said, that he was the offspring of OCEANUS and TETHYS; which, allowing that he came from a country beyond the seas, is easily explained, but is otherwise a senseless legend. I must beg leave, said I here interposing, to offer something in support of the great antiquity of the Athenians. It is a tradition among the Ægyptian priests, that they were originally a Sethroite colony; and that OSIRIS left TRIPTOLEMUS with them, in their new territory, to teach them the art of tillage. The Phœnician sacred records relate, how CHRONUS travelled about the world with his daughter ATHENA, and gave her the coast of Attica; so that both these authorities fix the first settlement in Attica, as high as the times of OSIRIS. And there is reason to believe, from the testimony of those two nations, which contend for the earliest antiquity, that these eastern countries, which

have successively been the seats of empire, were overspread, about the same time, from one common stock. Beyond the times of OSIRIS we find nothing in the Ægyptian account, but mythology. I am not ignorant, there are Phœnician traditions pretended to be derived from TAAUTUS, which carry up the history of the human race for ten generations higher than CHRONUS. But you, TEASPES, I know, consider that ancient epoch of OSIRIS, about which ends with the Ægyptians the reign of their demi-gods, as the time, when the earth began to be planted anew after the universal deluge." "I do, replied TEASPES; and I make no doubt, but that SISUTHRUS and his family, who so miraculously, as it is related in the books of the Chaldæan sages, escaped the universal deluge, might pass among posterity for a remnant of the race of the demi-gods, who had existed in another state of things. And if we consider, how impossible it was for any monuments to have been preserved of the antediluvian ages, and what the state of most nations, after their first planting, must have been; we shall necessarily be brought to fix here the earliest æra of the historical times. And the Greeks cannot complain, though we allow not of their springing from the earth itself, that we have made their origin too recent."

"I thank you both, said PYTHON, for this polite and rational enquiry into a subject, which appears, in the light you have considered it, to be of the greatest moment for establishing an universal benevolence among the human species. You could else, I am ready to believe, have more easily indulged me in my Grecian prejudices. But to speak the truth, I am much less concerned for what becomes of the boasted original of my Athenian friends, than I am for improving, as far as may be, those principles of humanity, which are so forcibly inculcated from

the consideration of the whole race, as being descended of one common stock. But my curiosity is much excited, to know the opinion of your enlightened sages, with regard to the origin of man, and when he first existed upon the earth. The subject of our present conversation naturally leads to this further enquiry." " This question, said TEASPES, is closely connected with our Magian doctrines of the Cosmogony. However, I shall not be unwilling to gratify your curiosity, since an explanation upon these subjects will do honour to the religion of ZOROASTER, and clear up our philosophical opinions from those gross mistakes, which some of your countrymen have entertained concerning them.

L.

L E T T E R CXLII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYRS. From Athens.

THE fortune of the war, which, since my last dispatches, inclines to the side of Athens, has given a sudden turn to the affairs of this country, which, if some unforeseen event does not arise, may produce consequences, not less advantageous to the Grecian states, than detrimental to Persia. Thou must have judged, from all the accounts of Pylus, that it was reduced to the last extremity; and indeed so little expectation of preserving it remained here, that nothing could be more surprizing, as well as agreeable, than the news we received within these few days, that the blockade was raised by sea, and a truce concluded with the Lacedæmonian generals. Those, who have been long conversant in political business, must have frequently observed, that when their hopes seem best founded, and their thoughts are employed in pursuing a series of imaginary triumphs, one unlucky incident reduces them to despair, and soon after a stroke of good fortune, as unlooked for as the bad, restores spirit and resolution to their counsels.

Without making a particular application of this remark to the Athenian republic in the present crisis, I will hasten to explain the facts, which gave rise to it. Not long after the desperate assault maintained by DEMOSTHENES, (of which my last

ters made mention) the Athenian admiral from Zacynthus came up with forty sail, and offered battle to the Lacedæmonian fleet, which, instead of accepting the challenge, kept itself ranged in a line close to the shore within the harbour. Upon this Nicias called a council of war, where it was determined, by the unanimous opinion of the captains, to force their way into the port, the entrance of which, either through neglect, or want of skill in the engineers, was not blocked up in the manner at first proposed. The project was as gallantly executed, as it had been wisely concerted: five of the enemies ships were taken; several of them run aground and were much shattered; and none would have escaped being entirely demolished, if the soldiers from the Lacedæmonian camp, on the shore, had not entered the sea with their arms, and recovered some of their vessels, at the sword's point, out of the hands of the Athenians. In consequence of this success, supplies of men and provision were immediately thrown into Pylus, the coast cleared of the Peloponnesian galleys, and four hundred and twenty natives of Lacedæmon shut up in the island Sphacteria, and deprived of all possibility of relief, whilst the Athenians continued masters at sea. The news of this action no sooner reached Sparta, than the magistrates, in the deepest concern for the danger to which so many of their bravest and most distinguished citizens were exposed, repaired in person to the Peloponnesian camp; and finding it impracticable, from the disposition made by the Athenian commanders, to give any assistance to their distressed countrymen in the island, proposed a suspension of arms to Nicias and Demosthenes. They agreed to it on the following conditions: First, That ambassadors should be sent from Sparta to Athens, with full powers to conclude a definitive treaty. Secondly,

That the Lacedæmonians should deliver up all their ships of war, at that time lying on the coasts of Laconia, to Athenian commissioners, who should be instructed to restore them at the expiration of the truce, which was to last till the return of the ambassadors. Thirdly, That the Athenians should give leave for a daily stated portion of bread, flesh, and wine, to be conveyed into the island for the use of the garrison there. Fourthly, That if any one of these articles was broke, the whole should be void. Thou mayest imagine, noble scribe, with what joy conditions so honourable to this state were ratified by the people. NICIAS's conduct is much applauded; and the general opinion of him strengthened, that though he is slow in resolving, yet, when once engaged in action, he wants neither address nor vigour in executing. The Lacedæmonians have nominated three of their principal citizens for ambassadors, who are shortly expected to arrive here. This full tide of fortune flowing in at once upon the Athenians has greatly exalted their spirits; and from that very circumstance, I should conjecture, they would not make a right use of it. They have this day sent an express to PYTHON, with an answer to the points complained of by our court. As to the depredations on our merchants, they assert the right, which all nations have, in time of war, to prevent supplies being carried to their enemies; and endeavour to shew, that the far greater number of vessels on the list delivered in to their minister are included under that head. For the rest, they offer satisfaction in general terms, when a more particular enquiry has been made into the losses. As to the receiving ZOPYRUS, they alledge, that they could not have secured his person, without violating all the laws of hospitality in use among the Grecians, and making a most ungrateful return to the kindness and

regard. which his mother had always shewn to the republic of Athens. That however, he had communicated none of his projects to the state, had received no encouragement from them, and was alone answerable for the consequences of his misconduct. These instructions conclude, by representing the fresh grounds of alarm, which they have taken at the king's designs against the Greek colonies, by the encampment of the army near Sardis, and the discovery of several Persian agents in Miletus and Smyrna, who have confessed, upon examination, that they were employed to bring over the citizens to submit, without opposition, to the government of ARTAXERXES.

These paper-weapons, potent lord, give me no uneasiness, as they can produce no obstruction to the king's measures. But the prospect of a general peace amongst the Grecian states fills me with apprehensions, which I wish, for the sake of Persia, may be entirely chimerical. Will they not, in this case, unite to disconcert the views, which our master may have formed upon the maritime cities of Asia minor, and the isles of the *Ægean* sea? Will they not lay hold of the slightest pretence to transport an army to the opposite continent, and spread desolation over the neighbouring provinces? And to what hazards may not our commerce and marine, which have within these few years begun to recover themselves, be exposed from the united force of a nation, inured by education and experience to continual toils and warfare?

A strong party in this republic, composed of the men of substance, the elder citizens, and the husbandmen, declare strongly for peace. They cry out, that the pre-

sent opportunity should not be lost, of delivering Athens, as well as the rest of Greece, from the calamities under which they have long laboured, and of establishing their general happiness and security on lasting foundations. NICIAS is the principal labourer in this good work, a man of piety, inclining to superstition, and a gravity something formal. He has long been the champion of the aristocratical faction against CLEON and the popular demagogues, and for that reason stood the mark of their calumnies and ridicule; but he is so universally acknowledged to be a disinterested lover of his country, and a prudent conductor of business, that he possesses no small share in the esteem of the people. Next to him, both for credit and capacity, I may well reckon my friend PHILEMON, whom I have often mentioned in the course of these dispatches, and I can add nothing farther now concerning him, than that he wishes most ardently to close his eyes with the satisfaction of having contributed towards uniting the Greeks. I do not in the least doubt, that CLEON and his faction will throw all the obstacles possible in the way of these negotiations. But the question is, whether the true interest of this republic, supported, as it is, by the friends of peace, will not prevail in the struggle; nor can any thing prevent it, unless the Athenians, flushed with success, insist upon terms, which the Lacedæmonians cannot agree to, consistently, with their own honour and that of their allies.

If I may have the permission to open myself freely to thee, I should think nothing would tend more to advance the king's affairs in these parts, than to keep ambassadors resident with the principal commonwealths. Those,

who act by public authority, can take their measures on the spot with boldness, can lay hold of every favourable opportunity to set on foot an useful negotiation, and are not ashamed or afraid to raise up friends to their sovereign, and act in concert with them: whilst an unauthorized agent, like myself, is unable to take one step, without innumerable precautions and reserves; can barely suggest fit occasions to his court, which pass by unprofitably, before they can be turned to account; and, were he observed to form parties in the state, or declare himself for one prince more than another, suspicions would be raised, his own safety endangered, and his life, perhaps, sacrificed to the malice of his enemies, and the severity of the laws. Imagine not, potent lord, that I would decline any difficulties or hazards in the discharge of my duty here. Whatever instructions I may receive in this critical juncture (which I expect with impatience) shall be performed with the utmost exactness. I hope, you will have made some progress in the conferences with the Lacedæmonian ambassadors, before the news of these changes can reach them.

I shall not lengthen out this dispatch, by entering into any detail of the affairs in other places, to which the Athenians themselves, at this time, give but little attention. They are not much concerned at the loss of Eione in Thrace, which was taken by SIMONIDES, their general, at the beginning of the spring; nor with the revolt of Messana in Sicily from their alliance, though a town of importance. There have been two naval engagements between the Syracusan and Athenian squadrons in the streights of Sicily, of no great consequence to either side, unless that the latter are retired to Rhegium, and expect orders to return home, and leave the inhabitants

of Sicily to decide their controversies amongst themselves. I refer the event of ZOPYRUS's attempt on CAUNUS to the relations of the governor of Caria, being persuaded it is a subject equally disagreeable to us both. The giddy youth, intoxicated with pride, paid no regard to my friendly admonitions, and has thrown away his life and reputation in the chimerical projects of rash adventurers. He had certainly parts to have deserved better of his sovereign. May he be the last instance of disloyalty ARTAXERXES may experience during the course of a reign, for the conclusion of which, I sincerely wish the youngest man in the empire may not live to see his household fire extinguished. Adieu.

P.

L E T T E R CXLIII.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER.

TEASPES, who had so civilly complied with my request, continued his discourse in the following manner. "In the theory I am going to advance, you must not think it strange, if I as much dissent from the Ægyptians and Phœnicians, as I have hitherto held with them in their historical accounts, against the uncertain and fabulous traditions of the Greeks. I can no more understand, how a wind inclosed in the cavities of unshapen matter could be the active principle to work out of it an organized body, than I can believe the original production of men, and other animals, to have been from the slime of the Nile, impregnated by the heat of that climate, without recurring to an higher cause. The human body, we allow, was formed out of the earth, and blended with the other elements; but we enquire after that intelligent plastic power, which could produce so excellent a fabric. Without it, we have a great deal to account for, before we come to the production of a being endued with life and sense. Let us suppose then the elements in a state of chaos, or lying together in one undistinguished mass. By what innate powers shall they be separated; and what shall dispose them in that excellent order and harmony, we so justly admire in the arrangement of the universe? Let us suppose, if you please, for mere amusement, a dark troubled air, hovering over a watery mixture, or a wind causing a great

ferment in the general mucilage of matter. Then, in the violent agitation, the fiery particles are to find their lightness, and mount up to the higher regions; and by that means, out of this *môt*, or troubled mixture, the sun and stars are to shine out. The grosser matter, by reason of its weight, must sink as low as possible; and the humid parts being lighter, should consequently rise and float above it. What lucky chance then prepared that great chasm and profundity to contain them? And when the waters were taught to know their bound, what fixed the radiant MITHRAS at such an equal distance, as to dry, but not burn up, by his parching heat, the drained earth? What, in the mean while, supported the whole fabric? Or, when the separation of the elements first began, what assigned them height or depth in the boundless circumscribing space? And what gave the terraqueous globe, when formed, its perpetual rolling motion; by which every part by turns is made to partake of the genial influence from that luminary? How infinitely perplexed and embarrassed are our notions, when we would establish effects without a cause, and suppose a master-piece of design and contrivance not to have been produced by an intelligent author? But let us proceed in examining this hopeful formation of the mundane system. We are to suppose things endued with vegetative and animal life, and at last intelligent animals produced from principles, without either sense or intelligence. How do those skilful Cosmogonists acquit themselves of this arduous task? Why, they tell you of violent thunders and lightnings, at the stroke of which, the inanimate organized forms were awakened into life, and roused and frightened with the sound began to stir and look about them. If you enquire further, how these chance productions came to be ready formed and organized, I will, with ORSAMES's leave, make free with the recon-

dite wisdom of his Ægyptian friends." "I thought, said I, TEASPES, you had entertained a better opinion of me, than to believe me a convert to any of their doctrines; much less to that, which, without the mention of a divine artist, attempts to account for the origin of his creatures." "Pardon me, replied TEASPES, I would by no means insinuate, that you deserve this imputation; the most that can be said, is, that you differ from us a little as to the solemnity of the six seasons, which by ZOROASTER we are commanded to keep holy, in commemoration of the creation. For this, I know, you consider as an exotic representation of it, accommodated to the apprehension of the vulgar. But I am satisfied you entirely agree with us in the essentials of our belief, although you may think it was as easy, for the power of OROMASDES, to have raised this great theatre of the universe in an instant, as by the slower progress of many months. The Ægyptians, I was going then to say, maintain, that as the muddy earth became incrusted by the heat of the sun, the moisture underneath fermenting, bubbled up in many places, and appeared as so many pustules, wrapt up in thin and slender coats and skins; and this lasted, till the fœtuses arrived at perfect age, when their shelly prisons growing dry and breaking, made way for their delivery. This might be well reckoned among those absurd conceits, which are more wisely contemned than confuted. But they appeal, in this case, from the arbitration of reason, to example and matter of fact, and instance in the production of mice and other vermin, at this day, from the slime cast upon the land by the overflowing of the Nile. Of these, they pretend, some are perfect, others half formed, cleaving to the soil whence they are produced; which you, ORSAMES, have often observed to be a very ridiculous mistake, and an imposition too gross to pass upon people who have their eyes open.

They conclude from hence, that in the beginning of things, when the earth was perfectly fertile and succulent, various living creatures might proceed from it in like manner. But granting, that certain species of animals or insects swarm most in *Ægypt* at that season; does it from thence follow, that moisture generates animals from heat, without any other seminal principle? If it be capable of producing these, why should it not, by the same influence, at the same time, produce all the several kinds, that are existent? But this not happening, it is sufficiently evident, that there is something more than the action of heat upon putrified moisture necessary to produce them. I see no reason, if the soil be as fruitful now, as it was in the beginning, why it should not produce men and the nobler kinds of beasts in our days, if ever it did so. But if there hath been a gradual diminution of the generative faculty of the earth, that it hath dwindled from nobler animals to puny mice and insects; why is there not the like decay in the production of vegetables? We ought by this time to have lost the whole species of oaks and cedars, and the other tall and lofty sons of the forest; and have had nothing left in their room, but dwarfish shrubs, and creeping moss, and despicable mushrooms. Now, with regard to the production of animals, it amounts with me to the same, whether we consider them springing out of the earth, as they might, for what we know, in the beginning; or generated from creatures of the same species antecedent to them. For whether it be in the wombs of the earth, or in the womb of an animal, the matter must be rightly disposed for this production; must have in it the proper seminal principle; and be endued with that prolific power, which appears not to be any innate quality in matter. There may, for aught we know, be one general plastic nature belonging to the whole terrestrial globe, by which all plants and vegetables may be differently formed, according to their different

seeds. But what has this to do with animal life? You may proceed in the same manner, and suppose one more universal displayed through the whole corporeal system, which makes all things conspire every where, and agree together in order and harmony. But neither of these can we possibly conceive to be any thing more, than the laws of motion derived to matter from a first intelligent cause, who must be the beginner of motion, which experience teaches is not essential to matter, and the author of life, sense, and intelligence; which are things we could not possibly conceive to arise from any modifications of matter, even though motion were essential to it. After having said this, I need not be reserved in explaining to you, and developing of its emblematical dress the religious philosophy of the Magi. It has been falsely reported of us by those, who knew little of our worship, that we paid divine honours to the elements, and to the planetary system. This they build upon slight presumptions from a mistaken notion of our civil ceremonies, and of the representations said to be concealed in the Mithriac cave. In the salutation of MITHRAS we do indeed address ourselves to that luminary with solemn festive pomp and rejoicing; but it begins in the name of OROMASDES, and is directed to his honour alone, whom we praise for the benefits derived upon us from the sun, his great symbol and vicegerent in the heavens. Of the same kind is our festival of the moon, of Mars, and the other planets. The figures concealed in the Mithriac cave are astrological representations of the elements, of the zodiac, and climes of the heavens; as the cave itself is the representation of the world at large, in which the radiant MITHRAS fills the principal orb, dispersing his influence through the whole system. 'Tis well known, that in our solemn processions, the chariot, or horse, dedicated to the sun, is always preceded by an empty chariot, sacred to OROMASDES. This is not intended for mere idle pagean-

try, but to emblemize an holy doctrine. OROMASDES is with us considered as the first and supreme director of this most perfect chariot of the universe; and the sun, though the most glorious of all apparent objects, yet dispenses his influence through the visible creation, only in subordination to that invisible power: and thus there is an unity of power, and a monarchy in the universe. What therefore the Greeks have falsely called a Theogony in the hymn usually sung by the officiating Mage at our sacrifices, is no more than ZOROASTER's doctrine of the origin of the elements, and of the great phænomena of nature." "The Mithriac ceremonies, said PYTHON, have generally been objected to you by the Greeks, upon your disclaiming a visible divinity, and thought inconsistent with your pretended aversion to image-worship. How is it we hear of your MITHRAS pictured like a Persian king, trampling upon and wounding the sides of a prostrate ox, which naturally puts one in mind of the *Βουφονία* of the Greeks; a ceremony, to speak freely, of a very ridiculous kind, performed annually to the terror of all oxen, in memory of one, which had the boldness to devour the sacred corn, which was kept for the festival of BACCHUS." "You are resolved, I see, said TEASPES, to force your admittance into the mystic cave. However, I am not unwilling to indulge your curiosity so far, as may serve to undeceive you in these prejudices. Know then, that the concerns of agriculture and pastoral life, which employed mankind in the early ages of the world, first fixed their attention upon the heavens; and that as the fruitfulness of the earth, and of the animals upon it, was fancied to depend on the influence of the heavenly bodies, those objects, about which the first observers were daily conversant, and in which they were mostly interested, gave names to the constellations, which marked out to them the several seasons. Such portions, for instance, of the zodiac, as the sun passeth

through in the vernal months, they distinguished by the constellations, observed to be in those divisions, which they named the ram, and bull, in allusion to the genial influence, which the sun had, at that season, upon their flocks and herds, exciting them to propagate their kind. The next division of the zodiac is denominated from the twins of beasts, the emblem alluding to this, that the animals before mentioned are observed commonly to increase by twins. So that the figure of MITHRAS trampling upon the bull is no more than an astrological emblem, implying the influence the sun has upon that species of animals, when he appears in that sign, or when the heavens are in that particular configuration with respect to us." "I perceive, said PYTHON, that not satisfied with having dethroned the Gods of Greece, you will go on to vindicate the religion of ZOROASTER at the expence of our whole poetical mythology. Neither the golden fleece, nor the twin sons of LEDA, nor the unfortunate daughter of ICARUS, shall preserve their station among the stars." "Indeed, said TEASPES, the celestial virgin, for some ages, was taken only for a poor leasing maid, holding the fibul or ear of corn, in token of the harvest, till your poets, in complaisance to the fair sex, discovered her pedigree and descent from DEDALUS." "Well, replied PYTHON, I could be reconciled to you upon this head, had I not, in the capacity of a Greek, the same grievous complaint against you in this, as I had in the former question. You take pains first to mortify the vanity of my countrymen, by proving them to have been colonies from other nations; and now you proceed to lessen the reputation of our Orphic doctrines, by exposing their Phœnician original. And, to say the truth, if the Orphic doctrines are no more than Phœnician or Ægyptian fables, I fear the popular divinities have proceeded from the same source, and have a like precarious existence with Night and Erebus, or Love and

Discord among the Orphic principles. But, to speak freely, I can more easily part with these, than not acknowledge that eternal mind, the principle you contend for, in the origin of things."

I thought, CLEANDER, some account of this conversation would not prove unentertaining to thee, who never couldst enslave thy reason to arbitrary tenets, nor meanly prostitute thy assent to any popular prejudices. In matters of indifference to religion or civil life, it would be deemed very unjust to deny men the free exercise of their own thoughts; and surely those subjects, that are of importance to either, deserve a free and impartial enquiry, the more on that very account. TEASPES felt a sensible pleasure to find the Greek agent fit so loose to his national prejudices; and since he is so well inclined to the rational belief of one supreme mind, doubts not of bringing him to embrace the doctrines of ZOROASTER. Thou, who frequentest the Lycæum and the porches of the Greek philosophers, mayest easily account for the secret prevalence of those rational opinions, which, the politic lawgiver had reason to fear, might one day prove injurious to the Gods of his own establishment, when he made it penal to dissent openly from the national superstition,

L.

L E T T E R CXLIV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

THE reception which has been given to thy nephew CHARICLES at this court will show thee, with what weight thy recommendations are attended; nor can our opinion of his diligence and fidelity be expressed in a stronger manner, than by the commission he is charged with to deliver these dispatches into thy hands.

Thou canst not be insensible, that, for various reasons of interest and prudence, Persia has hitherto declined taking any part in the war, which for some years has, with greater or less fury, been carried on among the Grecian states. Pleased, that the whole attention of our enemies was diverted from taking advantage of our weakness, and their strength wasted by domestic divisions, we looked on this interval of tranquillity, this respite from unfortunate campaigns, as providentially sent to enable us to heal our loss, and recover the advantages, which, under the first monarchs, rendered this empire formidable to the rest of the world. But as it was never intended, that our repose should degenerate into inactivity, or our influence on the affairs of foreign nations be entirely lost, a favourable opportunity was expected to interpose with vigor and success, and break through those disgraceful conditions, which the necessity of the times had imposed upon us. This juncture, we hope, is at last arrived. Sparta seems disposed to embrace our friendship, and act in concert with us; and since

it is less against the interest of that state, to grant us the terms, which we expect in exchange for our assistance, than of any other, the king is inclined to think a Lacedæmonian alliance the most eligible measure he can pursue. But it has been justly apprehended, that these favourable symptoms in the Spartan counsels may have an unwished-for effect, of alarming the Athenians with the prospect of Persia's taking a share in the war against them, and inducing that republic to accept a disadvantageous peace, rather than hazard being oppressed by the united weight of so formidable a confederacy. It has been considered likewise, that in the present state of the war, which has drawn together almost the whole strength of both parties at Pylus, some action may shortly ensue, considerable enough to turn the balance in favour of one side or the other, and bring on a precipitate accommodation, unless at the same time that precautions are taken to secure Sparta, beyond a possibility of retracting her engagements, the like care is used at Athens, to foment the violent humour of the party, who wish the continuance of the war. These desirable ends can no otherwise be attained, than on one hand by flattering the ambition of the Lacedæmonians with the hopes of attaining an unrivalled superiority over the rest of the Greeks; and on the other, by engaging some principal person in the government of Athens, to co-operate indirectly with us, through motives of private interest or mistaken policy. I need not point out to you, that the uneasy condition of CLEON's private fortune, his rash and turbulent spirit averse to quiet and settled times, and the strong passion, which he has at heart, of sacrificing every thing to preserve his authority with the people, are circumstances in his character, that concur to render him the fittest engine for us to work with. But you will think all other arguments needless, when I have mentioned the

overture he has already made, to begin a correspondence with this court.

Upon telling PYTHON the other day in a conference, that I very much suspected the amicable intentions of his republic towards Persia, because they not only deferred returning an answer to the just complaints of our merchants, but had since added insults to injuries, by giving refuge to ZOPYRUS, whom the king had declared a fugitive and a traitor; he replied, among other things, that though the people might entertain prejudices against us, some of the first men in the state were strongly inclined to cultivate our friendship; adding, to confirm what he said, that he was commissioned by CLEON to lay him at the king's feet, with the sincerest professions of respect to his royal person, and desire of meriting his favour.

Upon these grounds, which I have opened to you at large, I have the king's direction to signify his pleasure to you, to take the most seasonable and early opportunity, after insinuating yourself so far into CLEON's esteem, as to induce him to repose a confidence in you, to present him with the inclosed letter from the king, wherein he expresses the opinion he has, both of his capacity and intention to do him service, and desires, that he would give credit to what you should communicate to him in pursuance of your instructions.

When you have thus entered upon the subject, and discovered, by the reception it meets with from CLEON, how far you may venture to open yourself with freedom to him, you shall proceed to engage him to use his utmost efforts in the assembly, to render fruitless any negotiations, which may be set on foot; flatter his ambition with the thoughts of reducing Lacedæmon, and fixing the balance of Greece,

during his administration in the hands of Athens; alarm his fears with the designs of NICIAS to promote an enquiry into his conduct, as soon as the war shall be concluded; and remind him of the views of Sparta to ruin one, whom they look upon as their greatest enemy, by favouring the schemes of the opposite party. Nor can you well fail of succeeding, if you enforce these political reasonings with the more weighty arguments transmitted to you by TERIBAZUS, the silent operation of which has more than once determined the fate of kingdoms.

In short, as the whole of this important business is entrusted to thy management, so the time and manner of introducing it, the subsequent advantages to be gained from it, and above all, the method of concealing it from the most discerning eyes, must be left entirely to thy discretion, who art able, not only from thy abilities, but thy experience in the affairs of Greece, to regulate thy conduct by lights on the spot, which it is not in our power to afford thee at this distance.

As soon as thou canst inform us of the issue, thou wilt dispatch CHARICLES hither again with the utmost expedition. If thou meetest with success, thou wilt have the honour of performing the most advantageous service to ARTAXERXES, that has for ages been achieved by any minister of Persia. And if an unlooked for misfortune should disappoint our expectations, and thy best endeavours, may some light bark convey my CLEANDER safe from the rage of the exasperated Athenians, to the friendly shores of Aſia.

ARTAXERXES the king to CLEON.

WE have great reason to be satisfied with the assurances, which PYTHON communicated to us in your name, being persuaded, as well of the sincerity of your intentions, as the abilities you possess to conduct yourself in a manner, that may be agreeable to us. We desire you to give entire credit to whatever CLEANDER the Ephesian, our servant, shall say to you on our part; and to be assured, that the radiant MITHRAS is not more regular in performing his annual course, than we are constant in extending our bounties to those, who deserve well at our hands.

Given at our royal palace of Persepolis, the last of the moon Adar, and 42d of our reign.

P.

L E T T E R CXLV.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER.

I shall not pretend to add any thing to the instructions, which I have sent you by the king's orders concerning CLEON. Both the reasons of this measure, and the particular steps which you are to take in the management of it, are clearly and fully marked out. The chief intent of my present letter, is to acquaint you, that LYGDAMUS of Cyprus, the captain of the vessel, which carries over CHARICLES, has it in charge to continue in the Piræus under pretence of trade, till he receive directions from you as to his departure. He is not in the least acquainted with the secret of your commission; and you may securely depend on his fidelity and discretion, as a man of honour, and his care and skill as a seaman. When you deliver him the token, by which he will know you to be the person I have mentioned to him, there will be no occasion to open yourself any further than by telling him, you are employed on a particular business for the king at Athens, and must desire he would keep his ship in readiness to sail at a minute's warning. If your negotiation meets with the desired issue, pursue the contents of your instructions by redispaching CHARICLES with the advice of it. But if CLEON either refuses the proposals, or hesitates about accepting them, a moments longer stay in Athens will be unsafe. Embark therefore with the utmost speed, for the

first port you can arrive at in the Persian dominions; and make use of the order I have sent you for post horses, to hasten your journey to the court, where, believe me, we have not so ungrateful a sense of your past services, as to afford you a worse reception, after having failed of success in so nice and dangerous a commission. Be assured, on the contrary, that your friends will omit nothing in their power, that can contribute towards your obtaining a recompence proportionate to the hazards you have already undergone, and to the opinion they entertain of your extraordinary merit.

I refer you to CHARICLES, who has been a diligent observer of whatever has passed since his arrival amongst us, for the ordinary occurrences of the court. He will not fail to give you an account of the queen-mother's death, and the ceremonial of her interment on the royal mount. It is generally imagined, that the misconduct of her daughter, added to the unfortunate end of her grandson ZOPYRUS, affected her with so deep a concern in the retirement, which of late years she has enjoyed, as to shorten her days. Our monarch has not been deficient in expressing the sincerity of his concern for the loss of one so dear to him; nor omitted any instance of a pious respect to her memory.

There are two or three other points, which having a more immediate relation to the duty of our respective employments, I shall not dispense with myself from touching upon, in as few words as I can.

When the news arrived, that ZOPYRUS was slain in his rebellious attack against Caunus, the king, out of regard to the services of his illustrious father, and his relation to the royal blood, forbade any public rejoicings to be made;

but was so much incensed at the behaviour of the Athenians, in permitting ZOPYRUS to sail out of their ports, that he sent immediate orders to AMORGES, to put to death all the prisoners, who were natives of that city. Two indeed were spared at the intercession of PYTHON, who represented, that they were descendants of CIMON, and that any respect shewn to the family and name of that great captain and worthy citizen, would be looked upon as an act of singular generosity in the king. The poor governor of Caria has been very near falling a victim to the base artifices of one of our ministers, who wanted to supplant him, and the malice of a favourite female slave, who can never forgive some words, which dropt from him in raillery, relating to her. A most terrible cabal was formed, and he was accused of nothing less than an actual correspondence with ZOPYRUS. I obtained leave for him to be heard in his own defence, before the council of seven; and though the objections to his conduct were plausibly dressed up, he made it appear to the satisfaction of all disinterested judges, that had he not pursued the measures which he did, the whole province of Caria had broken out into an open revolt.

I discovered, that the vilest practices had been used to extort confessions to his prejudice from several of the prisoners, particularly a despicable eunuch, who served ZOPYRUS as a secretary. But as opening a scene of iniquity may, in some cases, introduce more disorders, than it can tend to reform, I advised AMORGES, after obtaining an honourable justification of himself, to push the matter no farther.

It is not necessary for me to enlarge upon the tragical accident, which has lately befallen some of our young fa-

traps at the court of SITALCES, since your nephew is well informed of the particulars. The affair makes a great noise, and is much to be lamented; two of the sons of ARBERIUS, general of the horse, and RESACES, satrap of Assyria, are amongst the slain; and indeed not undeservedly, for, according to the best accounts, the disorder took its rise from their licentious and extravagant behaviour, though the resentment of the Thracian lords was carried to an unwarrantable excess. What happened in that country, during the reign of * DARIUS, on an occasion pretty nearly resembling this, might have taught our young satraps more discretion; for the jealousy of that barbarous and suspicious people is not to be trifled with.

ARTAXERXES, besides soliciting the punishment of the assassins at the court of Trace, has published an edict prohibiting any of his subjects (except merchants and artificers) from going out of his dominions, without a licence from the council of seven, under the severest penalties; and has likewise dispatched instructions sealed with the imperial signet, to the governors of the provinces, and our agents in foreign countries, which enjoin them to take particular notice of such, as presume to disobey this irrevocable mandate. I have enclosed copies of both for your perusal, and shall conclude, by recommending it to your good genius, to inspire you with a double portion of boldness, address, and vigilance in your undertaking.

P.

* Vide Herod. lib. v. cap. 38. &c.

L E T T E R CXLVI.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

I received lately a dispatch from the chief scribe, in which he informed me, that he had transmitted to you some particular instructions of great importance in regard to your conduct at Athens; and that if I could afford you any light into the affairs now carrying on, it might tend very much to advance the king's service.

You will do me the justice to believe, that I want no orders from Susa, to renew a correspondence so profitable to myself, whenever it can be done with safety to us both; and that I waited for nothing but a sure and speedy conveyance, to give you the best intelligence in my power of the present dispositions of this republic.

How sincerely they are disposed to accommodate matters, will appear from the instructions given to AGIS, PYSANDER, and CHYLON, their ambassadors, the substance of which I shall proceed to lay before you. They are in the first place ordered to represent to the Athenian assembly the earnest desires of this state to put an end to the expensive war, which has so long raged over Greece, to the dissolving the general union, and the great weakening and impoverishing each particular commonwealth. They are to mention the action of PYLUS, as what chiefly induced them to apply first for peace; which ought to render the

Athenians less inclined to treat, because experience will teach them, that success is usually followed with a reverse of fortune; and the more moderation they shew in prosperity, the greater will be the regard and esteem conceived for them by the rest of Greece.

They are next instructed to desire, that commissioners may be appointed to confer with them upon the particular conditions of a peace. They are to propose, on their side, a releasement of the Spartans blocked up in Sphacteria; a reciprocal exchange of the towns and prisoners taken during the war; and, if it is insisted upon, a sum of money for the re-delivery of Pylus into the hands of its old masters.

The ambassadors are further enjoined, not to break off the conferences, though the demands of the Athenian commissaries should differ from theirs; but to send an account to Sparta, and expect fresh orders. How far these proposals will prove acceptable at Athens, thou art the best judge, from thy knowledge of the characters of the ruling men, and the temper of the people; but that they will not coincide with the schemes of our court, I am extremely persuaded.

This state expects daily to hear from the ambassadors, whom they sent to Persia. I believe they will stay till they see the event of this Athenian treaty, before they send them fresh instructions.

It is difficult for any one, who is not an eye-witness, to form an idea of the anxiety and consternation which prevails over the whole city, on account of the danger that threatened the Spartans in Sphacteria. They call the

loss, which the republic is like to sustain, in case the Athenians make a descent into the island, the greatest blow they shall have received since the memorable action at Thermopylæ; for it is not doubted, but these men will imitate LEONIDAS, by falling with their arms in their hands.

There is something rough, I confess, but at the same time wonderfully noble in the martial policy of this people, which teaches them rather to sink under misfortunes, after a vigorous struggle for success, than purchase safety, where the consequences might tend to depress the spirits of their countrymen, and lessen the opinion which their enemies have justly entertained of their valour.

L E T T E R CXLVII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

I received thy dispatches, with the thirty talents, which were sent me by the treasurer, and have executed thy commands with fidelity. The sword continues drawn, nor shall be sheathed but in the bosom of this city.

In expectation of what might happen, I have, unknown to my patron PHILEMON, taken much pains to recommend myself to the company and acquaintance of CLEON. I have visited him at his own house, held, several private conferences with him, presented his wife with some Ionian silks; in a word, by doing offices of courtesy to himself and his family, have gained his entire confidence, and made my way, at length, to his sentiments in politics. I have already acquainted thee with the success of the Athenians at Pylus, and with the intentions of the Spartans to send deputies hither in order to demand peace. These deputies are on the point of arriving. And now listen to the sequel, noble GOBRYAS; for as soon as I received information of their message, I waited on CLEON, and sounded him, as far as I properly might, upon the subject. I told him, "I could not help joining in that joy, which every man, who wished well to Athens, seemed fond of expressing on the late success at Pylus; and that I came to congratulate him, as one,

who, being at the head of affairs, contributed the most of any person in the state, by the wisdom of his counsels, to secure its general felicity, and who might be considered as the remote cause of that particular advantage." "How firmly, continued I, must the city be attached to your interests, when it reflects, that your abilities have retrieved the usual good fortune of the Athenians, have made amends for the dishonourable measures of the timorous, the tardy PERICLES; and have opened a very fair prospect of conquest and glory to those, who before, dispirited with all imaginable circumstances of distress thought of nothing but defeat and ignominy!" When I had said this, the vanity of CLEON began to operate, and a secret satisfaction in the praises I had given him rose into his countenance. He answered, "that he could claim very little in this affair, but the grace of vigorous resolutions. To these indeed he had always professed himself a warm friend, and would invariably continue so." "You cannot, returned I, act in a way more becoming your own character, or the honour of your country. Excellent CLEON! you have truly thought, that to behave with courage is the best policy. Behold, what a sudden change is wrought in the face of your affairs, by the operations of one active campaign! The pride of Sparta is humbled; the Peloponnesians sue for peace." "Yes, replied he, with an elevated tone of voice, they sue for peace, because they know it is the in power of the commonwealth to pursue its good fortune, and effectually reduce the haughty and aspiring Lacedæmon to a level with the meanest republic of Greece." "Most certainly, said, I. You, who see further into the course of events than other men, know, that, instead of closing in with the advice of PERICLES's faction, who proceed on the low and shortighted maxims of his politics, it would be right for Athens to bring down the

Spartans in such a manner, as they shall never be able to recover themselves, or thwart the future designs of Athens for its own credit, and the welfare of its allies." CLEON seemed to applaud what I threw out, and added, "that, for his own part, he had always cautioned his citizens against treating with the Lacedæmonians on an equal footing, since they were difficult to be pleased, fond of delays, and expected to make conditions for themselves. I should not wonder, said he, if some propose it in the ensuing debates of the assembly, as a matter to be considered, whether it would not be highly for our interest, to close the war at this juncture in the midst of the Athenian prosperity. What if that old formal prig DIODOTUS, the orator, or the young coxcomb, ALCIBIADES, should favour those Peloponnesian deputies; and, in imitation of their master PERICLES, put us off with a good speech, or a simile, instead of reason? Will not they represent to us the ravages we have already suffered, and the danger of a new incursion into Attica? Will not they talk to us of the instability of fortune; and tell us, that we ought not to exasperate the Peloponnesians too far, and drive them on to victory through despair? I warrant you, they will produce their common-place topics, and perhaps quote to us the answer of THEMISTOCLES, who, when the Greeks had a design of destroying XERXES's bridge over the Hellespont, said, "that so far from breaking down what he had made there, they had better lay him a new one than detain him with them." "Such things as these are apt to make an impression on the multitude." "No, replied I, this sophistry can never do against the power of your eloquence." "And yet (interposed he with the usual unsteadiness of an obstinate man, when not controuled or contradicted in any thing he asserts to be true) there appears to be some weight in these arguments; since in

time of peace we may have an opportunity of securely establishing our dominion over the rest of Greece." On observing, that hints of this kind came from him, I endeavoured to confirm him in the other way of thinking, by representing, "that the Athenians were more likely to adhere to the present administration in war than in peace, when they would have leisure to turn their thoughts homewards, and examine into the state of their finances, the management of their fleet, the government of the islands, the fidelity of their officers, and be sanguine to reform what they call abuses, or (which is generally the consequence of such precipitate enquiries) to introduce new ones in attempting to amend the old." "Nay, answered he, with great warmth, (resuming his first reflections on the pride of the Spartans, and the conduct of the Peloponnesians) for my own part, rather than submit to the terms, which the Peloponnesians would offer us, if they were successful, I would call in the king of Persia to our assistance. And in saying that, continued he, I say nothing which ought to shock the ears of a Grecian; for such are the personal good qualities of ARTAXERXES, such his justice and moderation, such the prudence of his counsels, that I am persuaded the interest of Greece could not be consulted better."

To detain thee no longer with a circumstantial story, I required him to interchange pledges of secrecy; (and I own, GOBRYAS, I trembled when I did so;) he promised accordingly to preserve his faith with me inviolate. I opened to him my credentials from Susa, expressed to him in the handsomest manner the affection of the king for him, and acquainted him with the large present I was commanded to make him, on condition, that

he would use his utmost efforts to prevent the Athenians from making peace with Lacedæmon; a measure advantageous to Athens, as it would break the power of the Peloponnesus, and desirable to Persia, as it would be an ample revenge, for the several indignities offered by that petulant republic to our mighty monarch. CLEON consented, and appointed to meet me, in order to receive the money, in the grove of olives under the walls of the citadel at midnight. When the conference was over, I went home, and at the silent hour I have mentioned, conveyed the talents to the place agreed on, where, after waiting a few minutes, * I discerned CLEON at a little distance, by the pale light of the moon, advancing towards me in disguise. When we met, we administered to each other a solemn oath of fidelity. I told him, that my life was in his power, gave him the money †, and immediately left the traitor with contempt,

* On the basso-relievo before the title-page is a representation of this translation. The Acropolis is distinguished by the Parthenion and the temple of Erechtheus, and the grotto of Pan below.—The moon in her chariot marks out the night-scene.

† Though none of the historians mention this material circumstance of CLEON's taking a bribe from the Persian court to prolong the war, there is a remarkable passage in a comedy of ARISTOPHANES, called the Peace, (acted about five years after the negotiation between CLEON and our Ephesian is supposed to have happened) which in all probability alludes to some such story. At least it appears from thence, that it was a pretty general notion amongst the Athenians, that the influence of foreign gold was the cause which prevented the conclusion of a treaty with Sparta, at a juncture, when very honourable terms might have been obtained. I shall submit the whole passage to the judgment of the learned reader. The poet introduces MERCURY giving an account to TRYGÆUS a vine-dresser, and a Chorus of Athenian rustics, of the secret springs of those commotions which had set Greece in a flame.

though not without some pleasure, when I reflected on the success of my commission, I returned to my house, but was so haunted by the apprehensions of my own mind, as not to lie down on my couch that evening with tranquillity; nor can I remain longer in Athens, without perpetual alarms of discovery.

Generous GOBRYAS, forgive the anxiety of thy slave; indulge him in disclosing it to thee as his friend, not as a member of the supreme council. Suffer him to wish, however expedient this measure may be, either that himself had not been the artful instrument in performing it, or that it had been unnecessary for the affairs of Persia, to advise it. Henceforward I renounce all enjoyment or satisfaction in this city. I walk not in the streets about common business, without looking behind me every step I take; nor do I frequent public places with the same freedom as I used. When I view the countenance of PHILEMON, it affects me with shame; and that of CLEON strikes me with horror and aversion. Let me be recalled from so dangerous a situation, where it is at the mercy of him, who has betrayed the interests of his country for the Median gold, to assassinate, or spare the man, who seduced him. I beseech thee to solicit the

Οἱ δὲ τὰς πληγὰς ὁρῶντες, ἃς ἔτυπτον, οἱ ξένοι,

Χρυσίᾳ τῶν ταῦτα ποιόντων ἑξέον τὸ σόμα,

"Ὡς" ἐκείνους μὲν ποιῆσαι πλοσίως ἢ δ' Ἑλλὰς ἄν

Ἐξερμηκυθεῖς" ἂν ὑμᾶς ἔλαθεν. ταῦτα δ' ἦν ὁ ὁρῶν

Ὁ βυρσοπώλης. Vide Aristoph. p. 354. l. 644. &c. Edit. Kuster.

Which may be thus translated: "But the foreigners observing the mischiefs which they (the orators) effected, stopped their mouths with gold, which they distributed in great abundance. Thus Greece would have been desolated without your knowing it.—He who did this was a leather-seller."

king on my behalf; represent to him, that the design of my negotiation is completed in prolonging the war. In the mean time permit me to implore the gracious OROMASDES, that no pillar of infamy may be erected to my memory in Athens; that the histories of Greece may not transmit the character of CLEANDER, as a second ARTHMIUS in the same page with CLEON to posterity; or that my name may never be dragged from its chaste and spotless obscurity into a known and hated ignominy.

C.

L E T T E R CXLVIII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

AFTER having frequently written to thee on subjects of a chearful or literary nature, and speculated on points, which concern either the philosophy of the Greeks, or the legislator of the Magi, I sit down in a disconsolate condition, to relate the anguish of my own heart, and to implore the succours of thy divine instruction for CLEANDER the desponding. Wilt thou not blame me, O thou fountain of the purest truth, for transgressing the law, in not consulting thee in an affair of a dubious nature, before I determined in what manner I should act? I pray thee to inform me, if the book does not allow it in cases of necessity; or to enjoin me some penance, which may cancel this enormity. Consider only the design of my employment, whether every command from the court of Persia, enjoining me to perform a difficult and secret task for the interest of my country, is not to be immediately executed? And what though such commands may now and then be inconsistent with the letter of the Zendavist; yet I trust they are not with the spirit of that volume; and a blind obedience to them will meet with pardon from our holy prophet. Suppose then, it were given me in charge, to advance the glory of my prince, as far as lay in my power, on the ruin of a deserving people, who are so far from having done him an injury, that they have received many injuries from him or his

ancestors. Suppose, in consequence of this charge, I am constrained to practice every art of fraud, flattery, cruelty and false friendship; to make myself a slave to the passions of some, to tempt and gratify their covetousness, to add fuel to their prodigality; ought I to be drawn by any consideration into these inordinate vices, with a view only to indulge the ambition, or to aggrandize the dominions of that prince? Suppose too, that I have not only pryed into the policy and behaviour of the people, I am ordered to reside with, but have been an actor as well as a spectator in the game, and by undue methods, have contrived to perpetuate the miseries and desolation of a civil war.

I know not, whether the written doctrines of ZERDUST can be urged, to vindicate my conduct; but methinks it is not to be reconciled with the unwritten law of universal benevolence, which has been wrought by the finger of providence into our very make and constitution. We are told by that law, that every private inclination should give way to the love of our country; and a partial attachment to our country should yield to a disinterested regard for mankind. This is the perfection of our nature: and surely the written commands of the Deity must agree with the unwritten, unless you would contend, that one revelation has annulled the precepts of another.

I mean not, venerable SMERDIS, to perplex thee with my doubts, but to receive illuminations on these important questions from thy sublime genius. Forgive the distraction and the infirmity of a broken mind. In these circumstances, the expiatory feast of CHURDÂD gives me no relief. Let me beseech thee to recite constantly in thy morning and evening worship, the prayer of confession, the sacred Pitûpht, because of the transgressions of thy

friend ; and, while thou art humanely employed in acts of sanctity and devotion to procure me a passport over that bridge which every mortal must arrive at, I will make a fire-temple of my own heart, in which I will offer up the living flame of repentance to the great OROMASDES. Thus may I be at last persuaded to entertain some hopes, that the angels will not turn me naked into a state of horror after death, but that the five sisters shall weave for me, in common with all true believers, an everlasting mantle.

C.

L E T T E R CXLIX.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

I intended, noble scribe, according to thy orders, to have sent away CHARICLES immediately, with a relation of the conferences between CLEON and myself; but, on better consideration, I thought it more adviseable to put off his departure for some days, till a judgment might be formed, as well of the issue of the negotiations, as of CLEON's abilities and sincerity in performing his engagements. I can now venture to affirm with certainty, that the instructions lately received are fully carried into execution, and that the Persian court will have as clear and comprehensive a view of the state of affairs in this country, as it is in my power to give them; and must humbly offer my opinion, that in the crisis to which things are arrived, it is high time for them to take a final resolution, in regard to the party, with which they may think it their interest to close.

When the Lacedæmonian ambassadors arrived in town, they presented their credentials to the Prytanes, and desired an audience of the people, to whom they would explain the reasons of their coming. An assembly was accordingly appointed within two days after. This intervening time they spent in visiting their friends, and conferring with them on the forms of making their overtures of peace, and the means of rendering them effectual, not only by the force of arguments, but (what is most material in popular governments) the weight of numbers.

Whilst the ambassadors were forming their cabals, and feeling the pulses of the people, the opposite party, with as much zeal and more clamour, held hourly consultations, stirring up and alarming the minds of such as desired the continuance of the war, and exclaiming against the craft of the Lacedæmonians, who were now endeavouring to deceive enemies whom they could not conquer, by sending those, who, under pretence of being ministers of peace, should corrupt bad men by bribes, and amuse the honest, though credulous citizens, with fallacious, general, and trifling conditions. During this interval, I reminded CLEON, that he never would have so favourable an opportunity of recommending himself to the king, and consulting at the same time his own interest, as by stopping these negotiations in the first instance. He assured me, that he spared no industry in opposing them, adding, in his bold manner of speaking, that he would himself go to Susa, and offer his head to ARTAXERXES, if things did not go well.

On the tenth of this month Hecatombeon, the ambassadors were introduced into the assembly; and PISANDER the first in commission, made a speech to the people, in which, without departing from the dignity of his countrymen, or making any submissions of such a nature, as would raise the arrogance of the Athenians, he told them truly and frankly; “ that the desire of saving the Spartans in Sphacteria was the motive that induced his state to treat; and that, provided the garrison there might be permitted to return home, the Lacedæmonians and their allies were ready to conclude a peace, on safe, honourable, and advantageous terms for all parties. He concluded, by warning the people against presuming too far on their good fortune; told them, it would be in their power, by establishing a firm union among the Greeks, to give the law to other na-

tions ; and that himself and his colleagues would think it the greatest happiness, that could befall them, if it should lye in their power to contribute any thing towards so useful an end !”

When this harangue was ended, the ambassadors were directed to withdraw ; and the debate began on the question, whether the proposals of the ambassadors were sufficient ground to treat upon. PHILEMON was the first, who spoke to it ; he set out, agreeably to his usual piety, by telling his countrymen, “ that they ought to thank the Gods for the subject and occasion of this day’s debate ; that after the havoc made among them by the plague, which they had scarcely recovered, and the losses they had sustained in the field, he could not help looking upon it as a singular instance of the divine protection, that an enemy, who had been sometimes superior, always equal to them in point of strength and authority in Greece, should come to ask a peace at their own doors. How far that measure was a wise and necessary one, he might safely leave to the judgment of those, who wished well to, and understood the true interest of Athens. He would only say, that if increasing the annual expence, money taken up at large interest, decay of commerce, ruin of their estates by the neglect of agriculture, and other disadvantages, which the continuance of the war brought upon them, could recommend peace to any state ; it was most desirable to them. With regard to the preliminary, which the ambassadors insisted on, he thought it not unreasonable ; and as it would tend to restore a mutual confidence, and be a pledge of their forwardness to heal the distractions of Greece, he was heartily for it.

When NICIAS arose, besides enlarging on the topics, which PHILEMON had touched, he said, “ he thought there

could be no stronger argument in favour of treating, than that many of those, who, like himself, had been bred to arms, and whose interest, consequently, might be thought to lye in keeping the state engaged in war, were yet for putting an end to it. With regard to releasing the Spartans in Sphacteria, he did not think it was giving the enemy any advantage, because, as he was just come from the army, he could assure them, that they would lose more men, by making a descent upon the island, than the conquest of it was worth; for the garrison had strongly fortified themselves in it, and would sell their lives very dear. That continuing the blockade much longer must be impracticable; the coast would not furnish provisions for the fleet; and in case the weather proved stormy, as the season grew more advanced, their guard ships would not be able to keep their stations: and though it might be objected, that the Lacedæmonians themselves must be first starved out, he was of opinion, that several methods might be found out to supply them; barks with provisions from the continent might be run ashore on the island during the night, notwithstanding all the vigilance of the Athenian commanders; and those, who were acquainted with the Lacedæmonians, knew, that their soldiers could live harder than the troops of any other nation in the world."

EPIGENES, one of CLEON's orators, distinguished himself much on the opposite side; he argued, "that he thought this whole business a piece of policy in the Lacedæmonians, to get their men again. When once, said he, Athenians, you have complied with the proposals of the ambassadors, you may depend upon it, it will be no difficult matter to find out a pretence, however slight, to break off the negotiation. Had they an intention of proceeding sincerely, PISANDER, in his speech to you, should have opened something further of the conditions, which his state proposed

to treat upon. Then you might have judged, whether you ought to have given up the fair prospect you have of success by your arms, to the hopes of concluding a secure and lasting peace." When CLEON found, that this reasoning made no small impression upon the assembly, he rose himself; and, after a long and virulent abuse on the conduct of Sparta towards Athens for the course of many years, more particularly, by refusing to listen to any terms of accommodation, during the violence of the plague in the second year of the war, he added, "that the Athenians had now an opportunity returning the ill usage they had received from them: that though, in his own opinion, he could not help being against throwing away all the expences of a tedious war, by concluding a peace at the very juncture, that they were going to reap the fruits of them; he would, notwithstanding, so far comply with the desires of many-well intentioned citizens, as to give his own vote for a treaty, provided it was begun on safe grounds. That he could not help entertaining the same suspicion of the overture, with his worthy friend EPIGENES; and therefore moved, "that before any negotiation was set on foot with the Lacedæmonians, the garrison of Sphacteria should surrender themselves prisoners of war into the hands of Athenian generals, and be kept at Athens, till the Lacedæmonians had restored Nisæa, Pegæ, and Trœzen, (all places which the Athenians had abandoned by the last treaty) and on this foundation, a firm and lasting peace might be concluded." This question, after a long and warm debate, was carried in preference to the other; and then the ambassadors were called in, and acquainted with the resolution of the assembly. They desired time to consider of it, till the next morning, when they delivered in an answer to this effect; that, in pursuance of their instructions, they were obliged to insist on the preliminary of restoring an entire freedom to the Lacedæmonians in Sphacteria; but

they were so confident, that the proposals, which they had to offer, were such, as would appear, just and honourable to the Athenians themselves, that they desired commissioners might be appointed to confer with them, and hear what they had to say. CLEON appeared more violent than ever against treating upon this reply of the ambassadors; he told the people, "it was plain, what their enemies aimed at; they were conscious, their proposals would not bear the examination of the assembly; and therefore chose to treat with particular persons, whom they might gain an influence over, flattering themselves with hopes, that the people would be induced to ratify what those commissioners should conclude among themselves."

NICIAS, in supporting the ambassadors's request, again insisted on the difficulties of taking Sphacteria; upon which CLEON rose with great passion, and said, "every body knew, rashness was not the fault of that general; and perhaps too much confidence might seem his: however, he knew so much of the state of the island, and the strength of their own army, that he would undertake, if they would give him the command, on forfeit of his life and reputation, to bring the Lacedæmonian garrison back with him to Athens in twenty days." This offer occasioned great clamours in the assembly, and every body seemed amazed at so confident an assertion from one, who had never been much conversant in military affairs. During the disturbance NICIAS got up, and voluntarily offered to resign his generalship, if Cleon would undertake the exploit. The other, who began to think, that in the heat of his discourse he had gone a little too far, seemed now willing to decline it, and made some faint attempts towards excusing the peremptoriness and extravagance of his project; but the people still insisted, that NICIAS should resign his office to him, and he should immediately sail to

Pylus, and make his words good. The motion for commissioners was rejected with disdain; and the Lacedæmonian embassadors seeing nothing was to be obtained from a people intoxicated with the slightest success, set out soon after on their return to Sparta.

Thus, noble scribe, are the king's views fully answered by a renewal of the war, with such exasperating circumstances on the part of Athens, as must, in the end, throw Sparta into the arms of Persia. For besides the abrupt manner, in which the assembly stopt the first overtures of a treaty, I am informed, that directions are dispatched by the Senate to the Athenian commanders, not to restore the Lacedæmonian ships in their possession, as it was stipulated should be done, when the truce expired, upon pretence, that the Lacedæmonians have in some articles infringed it. 'Tis certain, this is a contrivance of CLEON, to render the two states more irreconcilable. That worthy patriot has since been elected in room to the office of general in the room of Nicias, who is much blamed by his friends for his hasty and imprudent resignation. CLEON sails in a few days, to join the fleet at Sphacteria, with supplies of men and money. His enemies seem to be extremely well satisfied with his taking the command upon himself; for by this means, say they, we shall either get rid of so turbulent a citizen, if he meets with ill success; or, if the arms of the republic prosper in his hands, (which does not seem probable,) we shall give a sensible blow to the Lacedæmonians.

CLEON visited me last night; and after giving a loose to his vanity, by the applause he very freely bestowed upon himself, for defeating with so much art the design of those who intended his ruin by concluding a peace, he informed me that he was just come from the senate, where a letter

of PYTHON had been read, which gave an account of the arrival of the Lacedæmonian ambassadors at Persepolis; and that it was the general talk of the court, that the treaty was on the point of being concluded with them. "It is impossible, continued he with much warmth, to serve ARY TAXERXES here, whilst he adds the power of his arms to the scale of our enemies. Do your ministry consider, that this unseasonable declaration will make the tide run so strong at Athens in favour of peace, that it will not be in the power of me, or any man else, to stop it? Or can they think it consistent with the marks of esteem and generosity I have received from the king, to put the finishing stroke to so important an affair, without giving at least the refusal of their alliance to one, who would use his utmost endeavours to bring it to pass."

I endeavoured to moderate his warmth, by acknowledging "there was much weight in what he said, and that I would do him justice by representing it in the strongest light to my own court. That as I had not lately heard out of Persia, I could neither confirm, nor contradict the truth of PYTHON's intelligence. It might probably happen, that he had taken up with the common rumours of the court, which are not always to be depended upon. That, however, it was not to be wondered at, if the ministers of the great king were ready to sign a treaty with Sparta, when he himself must allow, that though they had made several openings towards entering into a closer friendship with this state, none but general answers could be had in return; the commerce of Persia had been interrupted, and a rebel suffered to fit out ships in the Piræus for the annoyance of the king's dominions."

After some further altercations between us on these subjects, he departed with assuring me, that he had a great

probability in succeeding in his expedition; that DEMOSTHENES was clearly of opinion, a descent on the island was no such impracticable thing, as NICIAS had represented it; and if once he set foot on shore, he would shew the Athenians, that it was not growing grey under an helmet, or being perfect in the various figures of the Phalanx, that capacitated men to command armies.

Such is the arrogant conversation of this bold Athenian; who, whatever outward professions he may make, would, with difficulty, exchange the talents of Susa, which he may hoard in his coffers, for all the assistance, that the fleets of Phœnicia could afford to his countrymen.

Noble scribe, I should beg pardon for the length of this dispatch, if the importance of the matters it contains, would have suffered it to be drawn into less compass. May the helm of the state, where thou presidest, long continue to be conducted by thy salutary counsels.

P.

L E T T E R C L.

CLEANDER TO ORSAMES.

I have sometimes talked to thee of a set of men, who travel over Greece, and are fond of fixing themselves in Athens, called the Sophists. A very remarkable challenge, given out by one of them the other day, made me curious of seeing the event. PROTAGORAS publicly invited the city to hear him dispute in the *Lycæum* upon any possible question, that could be proposed to him in any branch of science. "No doubt of it, said I to myself, this man must be a prodigy of parts, as well as learning; who, after having informed himself in all things to be known, can retain them with such accuracy, and produce them with such readiness, as to be capable of confuting every antagonist, even under the disadvantage of defending the wrong side of the argument. How am I to be blamed, continued I, who have lived here so long, without applying for improvement to this great genius, or being ranked in the number of his followers,"

My mind was full of these reflections, when I had the good fortune to meet ALCIBIADES. I expressed to him my admiration of the sophist's superior wisdom, or superior confidence. "Come along with me, answered he, and you shall see, how our friend SOCRATES will deal with him. We shall have much entertainment from his ironies, for I

have just been persuading him to go to the place of disputation." "With all my heart, returned I; but give me leave to ask you, whence arose this practice among the sophists of exposing themselves to the triumph and ridicule, not only of true philosophers, but of rude mechanics? It is a rule, you know, at the games, never to match a Pentathlos against him who has been continually employed in one exercise. But the sophist gives an universal defiance; he claims the benefit of no restriction." "The rise of it is very singular, replied ALCIBIADES. I remember, when GORGIAS came here many years ago, in the character of a private teacher of eloquence, he envied PRODICUS, and used to laugh at the credit he had acquired by his allegory of the judgment of HERCULES." "This fool, said he, to one of his friends, who told me the story, has got a lesson by heart, and cons it over in every noted city of Greece. Then he plumes himself upon obtaining the name of ORPHEUS; begins to fancy, that he is placed on the same footing with the ancient civilizers and reformers of mankind; and believes he shall be figured to posterity with an harp, softening the wild beasts, and moving trees and rocks by the magic of his harmony. He has shewn scarce any learning or invention beyond this fable, which has raised his reputation, unless it be in the famous lecture*, that reveals the whole mystery of grammar, to which he is indebted for his wealth. By JUPITER, added he, the impudence and solemnity of a man's pretensions gain him more admirers, than the modesty or justice of them." He went immediately into the forum, as it were to exemplify his last words, and proclaimed his abilities and willingness to debate any point of learning, that could be offered him on

* PRODICUS read a grammatical lecture, to which no one was admitted under 50 drachms. SOCRATES speaks of it in PLATO's *AXIOCHUS*, and calls it τὸ πεντηκόντα δράχμων ἐπιδείξιν.

the spot. As he has a great command of expression, the thing succeeded to his wish; and the good people of Athens were astonished at the power of his eloquence. Since that, the rest of the sophists, not caring to yield the superiority to GORGIAS, have taken up the thing in imitation of him." Indeed, said I, the practice and its origin are worthy of one another, and contend the palm in absurdity. I can easily conceive why the younger sophists should fall in with this odd humour of the city, and endeavour to make themselves known by their extempore performances. But PROTAGORAS has been long at the head of his sect, and is a master of sense as well as language. I think it strange.— "I beseech you, interposed ALCIBIADES, think nothing strange. I find you are not so well acquainted with PROTAGORAS as I am. Before we get to the Lycæum, I shall describe two or three features of the man to you, which will be as good as a picture at full length of him. It seems he is the inventor of a logical fallacy, by which an argument may be turned two opposite ways, and be valid in both. EUATHLUS (whose family you may have heard of in Athens) had a strong passion to become a celebrated orator, and agreed with PROTAGORAS for a certain sum, that all the secrets of the art should be opened to him. The scholar paid half the price, on being admitted to his master, and stipulated for the payment of the rest, provided that he gained the first cause, which he should plead as an advocate at the bar. PROTAGORAS, without delay, informed him in all things necessary; and having trained him sufficiently to the exercise of the rules, which he gave him, exhorted the young man earnestly to appear in public. EUATHLUS, either willing to defer discharging his debt, or diffident of his capacity, shewed no respect to the counsels of the sophist. The sophist resolved to have his money, and cited EUATHLUS before a court of judicature. He

thought this an undoubted method of extorting it, and could not help insulting his pupil. "If, says he, the judges determine in my favour, then you will be obliged to pay me by their determination. If not, you win your first cause, and become my debtor by the terms of the agreement." "You are mistaken, cried the young man, and I allow your alternative. If the decision is in my favour, you have no claim to the debt by that decision. If not, then I lose my first cause, and the terms of our agreement acquit me. The court and the audience, who expected a very eloquent contest between the sophist and his scholar, burst out into a loud laugh at their subtlety. The judges left the question unsettled, and PROTAGORAS began to repent, that EUATH-LUS had been instructed so well by him. "And in truth, replied I, he had reason. To be grave with you, I wish all the philosophers, like SOCRATES, would endeavour to bring these teachers of false science into general discredit, and shame them out of Greece. It would have a considerable effect, I am persuaded, on the advancement of real knowledge, and on the manners of the times. What gives me a dislike to several of them, is their intolerable avarice. If a rich man is disposed to be kind to them, they preach up generosity, and cry down silver and gold, as of no more value than the pebbles on the sea-shore. Yet if an indigent friend intreats assistance from them, they recant all they have said, in favour of the virtue they have now an opportunity of exerting; so that humanity, gratitude, and private conscience, have no weight with them. They have a regard for one another, while their interests interfere not: but if an obolus be held up to them as matter of contention, their mutual friendship would be dissolved, their lessons of virtue forgot, and they would engage in a quarrel for it." "Your conceit of the obolus, said ALCIBIADES, calls to my memory an Ægyptian king, who had taught

some monkeys (for they have a wonderful aptness in burlesquing the human race) to dance together in chorus, and when they were dressed up in purple robes and vizor masks had frequently produced them in public, with success. At last, a facetious spectator one day threw an handful of nuts among them, which caused them to neglect their dance, tear their clothes, throw off their masks, recover the natural manners of their species, and fight with one another. But your reflections and my families break in unseasonably on another story I was going to tell you. A lively young fellow of my acquaintance, who was formerly a follower of PROTAGORAS, gave me a pleasant account of the audience he first had of him. His father, a plain illiterate citizen, accidentally heard the sophist one day at a disputation; and whether the old gentleman (as many do) admired what he did not comprehend, or whether he heard him speak on some popular subject, that struck his fancy, he determined to place his son under the care of so excellent a tutor. Accordingly he carried my friend one day to PROTAGORAS, and took the liberty of asking, what improvement he would teach him? "I shall teach him the utmost attainment of the human mind," replied the sophist, "that of speaking without preparation, on any subject that shall be given him." "What," said the old man, "though he does not understand it?" "Yes," answered the other, "or I am no master of eloquence. He shall be qualified in a little time, to turn the wisest assembly to any opinion he would chuse for them, by the mere energy of words. He shall have it in his power, to represent things of great consequence, as of no concern; and things of no consequence, as of the greatest. He shall know, how to depreciate the best, and colour over the worst cause with plausibility." "Hold, hold," cried the father; "by all the Gods, this is more than my son shall ever learn. But PROTAGORAS, have you the face to tell me,

for instance, you can persuade any man, that society may subsist without justice." "Are you desirous to dispute upon it, replied the sophist. I shall conceive you presently, that there is no difficulty in the thing." Would you believe it, CLEANDER, they entered into an argument, in which, you may guess, the sophist very soon got the better. "You amaze me, said the new disputant; this is a serious matter, and fit for the cognizance of the state; if I had the honour to be a magistrate, give me leave to tell you, that a fellow, who can prate truth, honesty, and justice out of countenance, should not stay one hour in the city." "Softly, I beseech you, replied PROTAGORAS. But though you are unable to do it, I can confute myself with facility." In a word, he performed that office so readily and elegantly, and so much to the satisfaction of the father, that he began to be better reconciled to him; and, before the conversation broke up, recommended his son to him. At the same time he strictly enjoined the sophist, to conceal from him the faculty of imposing on others, what is wrong: "or if, continued he, the same arts are necessary for the recommendation of truth and falsehood, be careful to instil into him such principles of virtue, that, however he may use them to the one purpose, he may scorn to abuse them to the other."

In this manner I was entertained with the easy flow of conversation, and good humour, peculiar to ALCIBIADES, till we arrived at the Lycæum.

C.

L E T T E R C L I.

CLEANDER TO ORSAMES.

WHEN we came to the Lycæum, we found SOCRATES there, and a great concourse of people gathered about the sophist. Our excellent friend began with saying, "that he was by no means qualified, much less pretended, to cope with the art and eloquence of the celebrated PROTAGORAS. He told us, that he appeared in this place, not to answer the challenge, (which would be as absurd in him, against a person of such skill in his profession, as for a mean wrestler to have accepted that of MILO * at the Olympic games) but to intreat his instruction publicly, on what he used to teach privately to his scholars, as well for himself, as for a numerous and admiring audience." The sophist answered with propriety enough, "that he taught his pupils a science, of which he understood SOCRATES to be a great master, the science of virtue." "And is then virtue to be taught?" said SOCRATES. "Yes, like all other arts, which contribute to the perfection of mankind." "I suppose, replied the philosopher, you mean, that it is as reducible to a system, as grammar and arithmetic." "Most clearly." "And is that system necessary to be known, before we are proficient in virtue?" "Yes." "Then why do the illiterate attempt to judge of actions as well as the learned?" "Because they, who know little, are

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* See Letter LXXII.

always least sensible of their own weakness." "Let it be granted. But how comes it, that in the assemblies of the people, when a debate is started on the public buildings or navigation, none interfere, or pass a judgment, except those, who have qualified themselves, by a particular study of them, under the care of consummate artists. Yet when a question is moved, depending on civil policy, or any of the virtues which support and adorn life, most men of common sense have something to say, which is material, though they are not indebted for their knowledge in these matters to the schools of sophists or philosophers? Or whence is it, that when the rules of grammar and arithmetic will extend themselves effectually to all the combinations of words or numbers, the general precepts of virtue, laid down by the teachers of wisdom, are so imperfect, as that many of the various intricacies and accidents of the moral world cannot be comprehended by them? In the former we are seldom perplexed, but in the latter we are frequently distracted, when we would reconcile the narrow reasonings of theories with the latitude of practice." "I suspend my answer, cried the sophist, till I have collected your whole argument. And what is your inference from this?" "'Tis a plain one, said SOCRATES: I mean to ask you, whether you think virtue can be taught, by advising a man to apply his reason to systematical speculations, and not rather by the exercise and government of his passions in action. Whether those few principles, which are the great clues to lead us through the mazes of life, are implanted in every man's nature, or imparted only to the favourites of heaven, for their own lucre, and the use of some, who can purchase them." "Your objections to my position, said the sophist, cannot be answered more pertinently to the matter of them, or more entertainingly for those who hear us, than by an ancient fable.

* There was a time, when the Gods alone existed, and nothing mortal was created. But when fate had decreed, that this habitable frame of things should be produced, it was given in charge to PROMETHEUS and EPIMETHEUS to supply each of the animal kinds, with those faculties which might be necessary for their convenience and support. EPIMETHEUS desired his partner in this office, to give him leave to perform it by himself; "at the same time, said he, do you overlook and correct me." PROMETHEUS consented. The other proceeded to his work immediately, and endued some creatures with strength, and some with swiftness. He next distributed hoofs, hides, horns, bristles; and nourished all beasts with grass and roots, or with the leaves and fruits of trees. The folly of EPIMETHEUS, who had lavished his favours on brutes, had like to have proved fatal to man in this establishment of things. The day approached, when all animals were to make their appearance. PROMETHEUS, concerned for his own honour, after many expressions of distress, resolved to steal the invention of MINERVA, with the fire of VULCAN, and added them to the human composition. Thus man was enabled to consult his own preservation. But as to those qualities which improve civil life, and were even necessary to constitute it, they were lodged in the citadel near the throne of JUPITER, whither PROMETHEUS durst not ascend. The human race by this means contracted an affinity with divine natures, and erected altars and statues to them. They made a language, clothed themselves, built cottages; but not being gathered into cities, they were exposed to the fury and incursions of wild beasts. At last some of them attempted to compose a state, and in so doing, they added to the havock by their dissensions, instead of preventing it.

* Vide Platonem in Protagorâ.

JUPITER, out of his infinite benevolence, compaffionated mankind, and ordered MERCURY to infill into them juftice, charity, and all the focial virtues. MERCURY asked, whether they fhould be diftributed in unequal portions, like beauty and ftrength. "Yes, faid JUPITER, let a few, who fhall command and inform the reft, be largely furnifhed with them; and for the generality, give them the feeds of thefe good qualities, but fo as it fhall require labour, education, and inftruction to mature and bring them to perfection."

"Thus, SOCRATES, continued the fophift, I would admit, that the principles of virtue are implanted in the minds of all men, but in fuch an obfcure perplexed manner, that they muft be cleared and drawn out by the leffons of the wife, before moft of us are able to apply them. Virtue is therefore to be taught, fince the pure and diftinct knowledge of it, which gives uniformity and ftadinefs to our conduct, is not attainable by practice only. SIMONIDES has fome fine verfes to this purpofe." "I own, faid SOCRATES, I cannot help admiring the fluency of your tongue, and beauty of your elocution; though I am unable to follow the train of reafoning in a long fpeech, becaufe of my natural flownefs of apprehenfion. You were going to cite the poems of SIMONIDES, which feem foreign to the ftrictnefs of our argument; and it puts me in mind of thofe, who knowing their own inability to entertain the company, would introduce a lutanift, or dancer. As this obfervation extends not to you, PROTACORAS, you will permit me to wave your verfes, and in order to bring our controverfy to a point, let me ask you, whether you do not admit, that the principles of virtue are implanted, though obfcurely, in the minds of men?" "I have faid fo." "Does it require a regular and liberal education, to make them ferviceable in life?" "Yes."

"Can he be said to act wholly by chance, who has never drawn them out clearly, or scarce bestowed a moment's thought on them?" "Undoubtedly." "Then such a one, either infected by the dangerous communication, or grown old in the desperate habit of vice, is not punishable." "Certainly not." "Yet the laws of the community punish the vicious of all ranks." "True." "Did you ever know a criminal of the meanest education, who said in excuse of his crime, that he acted by chance, and knew not it was wrong?" "No." "Have not you often observed a man determine rightly of an action, who was ignorant of the abstract principle on which its rectitude or depravity depended?" "Yes." "Then your own experience, and that of human nature, as well as the authority of our ancestors, is against you; and you must admit virtue not to be a matter of science, but that the illiterate and the learned are equally qualified to practise it?"

Thus PROTAGORAS concluded against the usefulness of his profession, before he knew, whither the reasonings of SOCRATES, or the turn of his own argument, would draw him.

I dare say, thou hast long joined with me, ORSAMES, in admiring the man, who has convinced the Greeks, that logic, and the disputations of sophists, are no more necessary to a sound mind, than the exercises of racers and wrestlers to a healthful body. That philosophy is not like a prince, confined within the walls of a palace, happy in the contemplation of its awful magnificence; but, like an active magistrate, watches over the welfare of society, and frequents the forum and Piræus, not the schools and walks of speculating sages. In truth, it is so free in declaring its sentiments, that a very little attention will inform us, what part it takes, not only in the general support of virtue, and

discouragement of vice, but in every particular scheme of action, that can divide the time, thoughts, or interests of men.

C.

L E T T E R CLII.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER.

THY doubts, *CLEANDER, have cast a gloom over these peaceful mansions. When from the top of the flowery Mount in my beloved hour of evening meditation, I cast my eyes towards Greece, I no longer viewed the charming landscape with delight. The glorious works of OROMASDES, displayed in every various beauty of creation, were clouded over by the evil influence of the wicked AHRIMAN. The dark perplexities, in which his baneful arts have involved the race of men, were the unpleasing objects, which thy letter had placed strongly before me. I considered Athens as an infected place, whose tainted air the delicacy of virtue could not support. White-handed Probity and dove-like Peace of Mind seemed on the wing towards some more happy region, where they should no longer be subject to the harsh laws of imperious necessity.

I pity thee, CLEANDER, sincerely. There is an eternal law engraven upon the tablet of the heart by the omnipotent hand of YESDAN, which cannot be infringed without the severest anguish of mind. Even they, whose compliance with thy temptations makes thee now look on them with abhor-

* See Letter CXLVIII.

rence, had once this sacred law imprinted on their souls. No mortal bosom is void of the divine illumination; but the first deviation from that innocence it inviolably prescribes, throws a thin mist over the radiance. By frequent repetitions of guilt, the obscurity grows thicker and darker; and the wretch comes at last to give up every sacred tie, without compunction, to the sordid views of avarice and ambition.

Beware, CLEANDER, how thou permittest the least access in thy soul to that encroaching principle of evil; nor strive to reconcile a doubtful action with the just laws of the sage ZERDHRUHST. No, there is no danger so fatal, as palliating evil into an appearance of good. The laws of ZOROASTER are but a transcript of that native law, which OROMASDES has written in thy heart. That heart is revolted at the idea of corruption. Thy hand draws back of itself from offering the infamous bait, which Grecian avarice so greedily reaches after. Yet this abhorrence seems to thy reason contrary to that unlimited obedience, that absolute devotion of service, which is due to the monarch of the earth. Here thy human sight is dazzled, thy head turns round, and the precipice is beneath thy feet. From its brink thou lookest back to the schools of Balch; thou callest for assistance from the Bactrian groves. This struggle of a virtuous mind is much to be commended. May a gracious emanation from the source of light assist thee to distinguish that narrow path, which amongst the perplexed mazes of human policy, is alone consistent with his original dictates. Human wisdom, CLEANDER, even in these retirements, where it is not disturbed by the tumult of the passions, or distressed by the intricacies of affairs, can go no farther, than to point out some few certain and immutable truths. Where, in their consequences, they

appear to clash, it must be a superior power, that can demonstrate their eternal consistency, since to obscure that consistency with false appearances, is the utmost effort of the potent ARIMANIUS.

All we can then advise is, to withdraw from those paths, which are so overspread with fatal snares, and seek for security in retreat. This is the only penance, that can be at all effectual towards thy passing the eternal bridge in safety, and arriving in those regions of the blessed, the certain, though distant, contemplation of which is the fragrant oil, that keeps alive the sacred flame in the bosom of every true believer, with a brightness, to which the splendors of all earthly greatness are more dim than twilight, outvying even the radiance of the Persian throne. While thy services to that were consistent with the universal law, thy virtue was heightened by its exalted object. Those services have been long and faithful. It is now high time to gain a dismissal from the arduous task. Wait not, I charge thee, for the tempting rewards of ambition: break off, without hesitating, every Grecian attachment; and follow timid Virtue to some humble cell. From thence thou mayst look back with equal transport, on the duties so attentively performed, and the guilt so narrowly avoided. Leave these dark scenes to other actors: if OROMASDES has doomed the destruction of the Grecians, fear not but he will find fit instruments to effect it, while thou shalt look on in happy innocence; instruments, who shall perhaps find the punishment of their guilt, in the permission of accumulating crimes. Farewel: may the source of light illuminate thy soul! No ritual observance shall be wanting on the part of thy friends, to atone for what is past.

T.

L E T T E R C L I I I .

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. From Persepolis.

I was some days in hopes to have sent you the agreeable news of our treaty with the Lacedæmonians being brought to an happy conclusion; but it has been broke off on the very point of signing, in a manner so extraordinary and unexpected, as leaves us entirely at a loss, to account for the conduct of the Spartan republic. From this preamble thou wilt no doubt expect a detail of the negotiation, which was undoubtedly, in its object, the most important, but proved in its issue, the most singular, that was ever entered in the chronicles of the empire. There was no pains spared to secure a good conclusion to the treaty, by a courteous and hospitable behaviour towards the persons of those who negotiated it on the part of Lacedæmon, and a frankness and sincerity on the side of the king's commissioners, in all the overtures they made to forward it. PLISTOLAS and PHARAX, the two new Spartan ambassadors, were received by the governors of the provinces, through which they passed in their way to court, with all the respect that could be shewn to the representatives of so considerable a republic. About two parasangs from Persepolis they were met by TISSAPHERNES, master of the horse, the captain of the immortals, and several of the satraps; who conducted them to the palace prepared for their reception within the walls of

the city. In the evening HYDASPES was sent to welcome them in the king's name, and settle a time for their publick audience, which was performed in full splendor a few days after. The speech which PLISTOLAS made to the king, when he delivered his credentials, was short, but not without dignity or politeness. "Great monarch, we admire the magnificence of thy court, and the number of thy attendants; but are more struck with the grace and majesty of thy person. And we doubt not, but that in the management of the business, with which we are entrusted by our native city, we shall have reason to esteem thy wisdom in the choice of thy ministers." The king answered them in few words, "that he could not but hope well for success of any negotiation, in which they were employed: that he would order some of his council, in whom he reposed most confidence, to confer with them as often as they desired it, and they should find him not less desirous of the alliance of Sparta, than that republic was of his."

When that day's ceremony was over, TERIBAZUS, ARTAPHERNES, and myself, were appointed commissioners to treat with them. I endeavoured indirectly to have NICANDER set aside, knowing, by experience, that he was an impracticable man, and would certainly throw obstacles in our way; but was told, that their instructions enjoined them to do nothing without his advice. At our first meeting the ambassadors put into our hands a declaration concerning the grounds of the quarrel with Athens; it represented the war to have taken its rise from the ambitious views of that state, which had endeavoured, by oppressing their allies, embezzling the public treasure at Delos, and other unjustifiable methods, to overturn the independance of the Grecian commonwealths. The hard usage of MEGARA and POTIDÆA, the suc-

cours sent to the Corcyreans, and the private interests and resentments of PERICLES, were not forgot. It concludes, by expressing the hopes, which the republic of Sparta entertained, that the king would not deny them his assistance in the prosecution of so just a cause.

Thou mayest imagine, CLEANDER, it was not our intention to dispute the facts alledged in this memorial; but after telling the ambassadors, that we would lay it before the king for his consideration, we added, that as no alliance could be lasting and sincere, when the contracting parties did not find their mutual interests concerned, we thought the most proper way of bringing things to a fair and speedy issue, would be for both sides to communicate their respective projects of a treaty to each other, the conditions of which might be debated in subsequent conferences. They readily agreed to it, and the king's commissioners presented the following paper*.

I. "That there should be a firm league and amity by sea and land between ARTAXERXES, king of Persia, and the republic of Lacedæmon."

* Such of our readers, as are not much versed in ancient treaties, will not take it amiss, to be told, that this project agrees in the most material points, (particularly the article which concerns the Asiatic Greeks) with the alliances afterwards concluded between the Persians and Lacedæmonians; of which there are several instances in the 8th book of THUCYDIDES, and the first of XENOPHON'S Græcian history. So great, we may reasonably suppose, was the reputation of the ministry of ARTAXERXES for wisdom and integrity, that their successors thought they could not regulate their conduct by sounder maxims of policy. Note by the Translator.

II. " That during the continuance of the war against the Athenians and their allies, the king of Persia should assist the Lacedæmonians with a fleet of fourscore sail, to be employed in such services, either jointly or separately, as should most annoy the common enemy."

III. " That for the better encouragement of the Peloponnesian sailors, the king of Persia should agree to raise their pay from three to four oboli a day."

IV. " That in consideration of these succours, the Lacedæmonians and their allies should secure and guarantee to the king, and his successors, the possession of all the cities in Asia, and their dependencies, which had formerly belonged to the king, or any of his royal predecessors."

V. " That they should further promise, not to disturb or molest the Persian navigation, in any of those seas, where it had been carried on in former times."

VI. " That in case of any invasion from foreign enemies, or troubles from domestic rebels, they should join the king's army with a body of ten thousand Greeks, to be commanded by the Persian generals."

VII. " It is further stipulated, that no treaty should be entered into, or peace made, without common consent."

The Lacedæmonian project differed from ours as to the proportion of succours, in ships and money, which the king was to furnish them with, and entirely omitted the two principal articles of a free navigation, and

the guarantee of the Asiatic colonies; only offering ten thousand men, and thirty galleys, as their quota of assistance, in case of any attack upon the Persian dominions.

At the next meeting, they were told by us, that we could by no means think the offers they made in any wise an equivalent for the advantages secured to their republic by the king's own proposals; much less were they equal to the extravagant conditions set down in their project: that we were directed to tell them plainly, that unless they would repeal the two articles in CIMON's treaty, as expressed in our draught, it was losing time to continue the conferences with them, and this negotiation must end as fruitlessly as the former.

NICANDER replied, that they were very ready to give us all reasonable satisfaction, and they would not dispute with us the point of a free navigation in those seas, where it had been prohibited; but it was impossible for them to surrender in express terms all the cities of Asia, for whose liberties their ancestors had fought, into our hands; since such a condition would reflect a disgrace on their republic, that could never be cancelled; it would set their own allies against them, and for once make the cause of Athens popular in Greece. I told them, that it was but common justice to restore the king to his rights, when he was to assist them in vindicating theirs; that I could not comprehend, what offence their allies could take, at a step necessary to secure to them the assistance of a powerful monarch; nor how the fate of Ionian colonies, allied to the Athenians, their enemies, could any ways affect the interest or reputation of Sparta. The dispute between us continued for some time on a footing, that plainly shewed, that as we were content to in-

crease our succours, provided the two articles abovementioned were admitted, they on the contrary would be satisfied with a less proportion, if they could prevail to have them laid aside. At last it was agreed, to refer the final decision of this matter to another conference. I observed, that PLISTOLAS and PHARAX took very little share in the debate, leaving the management of it wholly to NICANDER, who appeared most prejudiced against our demands. Upon communicating this hint to my colleagues, it was agreed, we should have a private conversation with PLISTOLAS, and endeavour to find out, whether they were not left more at liberty by their instructions, than they represented themselves to be; and whether this extreme obstinacy was not put on, in order to obtain the better bargain for the republic of Lacedæmon. PLISTOLAS readily came to me, and, after I had discoursed him on the present inability of his state, and their allies, to prosecute the war vigorously without foreign assistance, I urged him to declare, whether they had not power to make us farther concessions; or else, I assured him, we had orders to break off the treaty, at the very next conference. He said, there was a general clause in their instructions, directing them to adjust the interest of the Greek colonies in such a manner, as might be least dishonourable to the republic, and best tend to strengthen their alliance with the king; and he would confess to me, that he thought the articles we proposed answered both those provisos. But as they were tied down not to conclude any thing without the concurrence of all three, and NICANDER his colleague was obstinate against admitting this article, he did not see what was to be done; that he would make one more effort to gain his concurrence, and acquaint me with the result of it. The next morning he sent me a short letter to this effect, "that NICANDER was at last convinced, it was better to comply with our

demands, than put an end to the negociation." This convinced my fellow-commissioners and myself, that nothing more was wanting, than to draw out the treaty in form, and sign it without further trouble. But how much were we surprized, when at the next conference, after having read to the fourth article, NICANDER rose, and said, that upon further consideration of the purport and sense of his instructions, and the knowledge he had of the sentiments of those in the administration of affairs at Sparta, he thought himself obliged to retract the consent which his colleagues had extorted from him, to an article inconsistent with the interest of Greece, and dishonourable to his country! The other ambassadors seeming not less concerned than us at this declaration, maintained, that the republic would ratify the article, as we had offered it, since the cities in Asia were not expressly given up, but only included under the general description of territories formerly belonging to Persia. But NICANDER with great warmth declared, he had rather lose his right hand, than set it to such a treaty. Upon this personal altercation, we told them, that till they had settled amongst themselves a point of so great consequence, nothing could be determined; that we had done all that lay in our power to facilitate the treaty, and were sorry, that they had not proceeded with the frankness and sincerity, which were expected from them. PLISTOLAS has since protested to me in the strongest manner, that he could not imagine what were NICANDER's reasons for retracting; and to prove to me that PHARAX and himself were really of opinion, that they should not be disowned by their principals, he has offered to sign the treaty without NICANDER. But it has not been thought proper to accept this proposal, because of the clause in their instructions, which renders their unanimous concurrence in every particular necessary.

We have since received your letters, which contain an account of the truce concluded between the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, and the strong disposition, which appears in both sides to put an end to the war. Several are of opinion, that the ambassadors must have had some earlier notice of these transactions, though they have not acknowledged it to us; for they say, that NICANDER's retraction of his consent, and the absurd offer of PLISTOLAS and PHARAX, which, they knew, we could not with any security depend upon, bear all the marks of a disingenuous piece of shuffling, contrived to palliate a change of measures, which was really occasioned by an alteration of affairs at home. However we are not without hopes, that the instructions sent by CHARICLES will have reached Athens time enough to enable you to prevent a final accommodation. In the mean time, till their success is known, our counsels here are at a stand.

What you mention in your letter of the good effects that may arise from employing ambassadors, and the disadvantages with which unauthorized agents contend, has such weight, that it is determined to send ARTAPHERNES with an extraordinary commission to Sparta, as soon as the event of the treaty begun at Athens shall be known. I believe PYTHON is pretty well recovered from the consternation he was at first under, when he heard our negotiation with the ambassadors was almost concluded. He came in great haste from ORSAMES's Villa at Taoces, to interrupt it, as far as lay in his power. The king told ORSAMES pleasantly, upon seeing him the other day in the presence chamber, "that he could not help being alarmed at the frequent private conversations, which he held with the Athenian agent; and believed he must examine him upon the subject matter of them." ORSAMES replied, "he was content to undergo the enquiry, and would confess, that in some of

his letters to CLEANDER was contained a full account of all his practices with PYTHON." I had a long conference with that minister upon the assembly's answer, mentioned in your last dispatch, and brought him to acknowledge, that immediate satisfaction ought to be made for some of the ships on our list: the state of the case, with respect to the others, he is to settle with commissaries of the marine, who are ordered to confer with him. He likewise informed me, that the people of Athens, to shew how little part they had taken in ZOPYRUS's expedition, entirely approved the king's proceedings in regard to such of their countrymen, as had been made prisoners in their retreat by the Caunians, which I told him the king could not look upon as an adequate satisfaction to the injury they had done him, by suffering ZOPYRUS to sail out of their ports, when his design was publickly talked of at Athens; and that he insisted, they should punish all, who returned thither, after openly appearing in arms at Caunus. I find PYTHON inclined to a prosecution of the war against Sparta, particularly if our assistance can be obtained; and strongly of opinion, that the majority of the assembly will reject a treaty. But as I suspect him to be a creature of CLEON's, I am doubtful what credit to give to his assertions. The persons seized at Miletus, it is true, were the king's agents, which gives a present interruption to our designs in those parts, though the chief reason for suspending them is to wait the event of the treaty at Athens; for it is by no means our intention to draw upon ourselves the arms of all Greece, before we are thoroughly prepared. Farewell.

P.

L E T T E R CLIV.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

ONE would think, that the inquisitive and aspiring people, among whom I reside, satisfied with the progress they had made in all parts of science, were for pushing their intellectual discoveries into a new and untried region, and had some ambition of adding to their boasted acquisitions in knowledge, the knowledge of futurity. Infinite almost is the collection of observations, which they have made for this purpose; yet an order of men is set apart for collecting more, or interpreting what they already have; and they imagine themselves in a likely way of reducing to all the certainty and regularity of system some of the seemingly most casual things in nature.

I was drawn into this reflection by just now passing by a place, where one of these augurs, who are supported here at the public charge, was engaged in the business of his profession. He was seated in a chair of a particular make, and appropriated to that use; clothed in a long white robe; had a crown of gold upon his head, and was adorned with all the other habiliments of his office. He had a tablet in his hand, on which he writ down every circumstance relating to the birds of divination, their flight, species, voice, and manner of appearance; every thing, that might assist the enquiry he was making, which was to collect from such notices, as these messengers were supposed to bring, whether a projected descent of the Athenians upon the island Sphacteria would meet with success.

I did not care for asking many questions on so nice a point, lest I should draw any suspicion on myself and character; and therefore could not perfectly inform myself about the whole process and issue of this affair: but I should judge from the general joy and pleasure, which were diffused over the countenances of the assembly, that they had not the least doubt, that the event would be fortunate, and the Gods favourable to their design.

This incident naturally turned my thoughts on the subject of divination, and the various kinds of it, that are here in use. Some indeed attended with more solemnity and expence, and therefore held in a higher degree of credit and esteem; but others cheap and obvious enough to every one: so that all have here sufficient means of satisfying themselves with regard to any event, which they have either a curiosity or a concern to know.

I would not presume to trouble thee, awful SMERDIS, with a detail of all the particulars, relating to this mystery. The whole would be too tedious, and many parts too trivial for thy notice. All nature indeed is supposed to have something of a prophetic gift. Every thing we see or hear is thought capable of affording some insight into our future fortune, and observed accordingly with a suitable attention. Every animal, be it bird, beast, or insect, under all the variety of circumstances, with which its appearance may be attended, every uncommon phenomenon in the heavens, every sudden emotion of the mind or body, our very dreams, and even words, are imagined to contain some presage of approaching good, or warning against impending ill. These notices indeed are sometimes too fine for the coarser sight of common apprehension, but cannot escape the penetration of the more acute observers, who are trained up to

the art, and invested with a public authority to interpret them.

There is one kind of divination, which is supposed to proceed from some immediate communication of the Gods; another, which is the result of observation, and attainable by experience. Some pretend to be actuated, in an extraordinary manner by a *dæmon*, or spiritual agent, who transacts every thing without their privity, and makes use only of their organs in the answers he gives, and the discoveries he makes. Another sort have their bodies thrown into a lethargic and insensible state, while their soul, at these seasons, disengaged from its heavy associate, is at liberty to traverse unconfined the regions of earth and heaven, and instructed by the free conversation of Gods and heroes brings back such various intelligence, as enables them to satisfy all enquiries. We have accounts of those, who have continued a whole age in this dormant posture; but I think poor HERMODORUS was in the most pitiable circumstances, whose body being betrayed into the hands of his enemies, while his soul was engaged in one of these improving excursions, they took an unmanly advantage of his absence, and destroyed the cottage, while the tenant was abroad.

Of all the methods of prediction, that depend on human skill, augury is here in the most repute. Nothing may seem more uncertain than the flight of birds, or more unintelligible than their voice, or uninteresting than their appearance. But every thing relating to them has here some meaning; sometimes more clear and explicit, sometimes more secret and mystical, but such as may easily be unfolded by the professors of the divining art, in all the more nice and complicated cases. These creatures, like others, seem commonly intent on the means of supporting their own being, or providing for the support of their offspring.

But it is concluded here, that they have higher views; and though they may appear to the less discerning busied in such inferior matters, yet they come to inform the Athenians when their armies should march, or their fleets sail, with whom war is to be carried on, or peace concluded, when their magistrates should be elected, or assemblies meet for the dispatch of business; for nothing of a public nature, and of any consequence to the state, is determined here without their concurrence. Whether these notices by birds be owing to some divine direction, or may not, in some measure, proceed from their own sagacity, I have not been able fully to inform myself; for so fundamental a part of their religion is a subject of too much nicety and importance, to be entered freely into, or to admit of any debate. To suppose them sent by an express appointment, seems a more reasonable foundation for the strong confidence they place in such admonitions; though some proverbial sayings in use among them, of their being privy to the most secret transactions, would make one think, they believed them in their own nature to be most prying and observant creatures.

But though this method of divining be more frequently practised and attended with more formality, yet there are a thousand others in great credit. Lightning and meteors are celestial signs, to which great attention is paid. A tingling of the eye, and a palpitation of the heart, are included in the class of divine prognostics. It was a sneeze from one of his right-hand attendants at the time of sacrifice, that is said to have given THEMISTOCLES the first earnest of his success against Persia. And our calamitous defeat at Salamis was partly owing to the warmth of spirit and confidence of victory, with which his soldiers were animated by this seemingly insignificant incident; though we ought not to deny the owl, that perched upon the mast of his ship, the share he had of kindling up this martial ardor. For

however unpromising or inauspicious his aspect may be in other places, he is treated at Athens with great veneration, and trusted as one of the surest omens of success.

Sacrificing likewise is not only used here to engage or acknowledge the favour of the Gods, but to collect whether they design to be favourable. From being practised at first merely on public and signal occasions, it is become a settled method of gathering their intention, or soliciting their assistance in the common exigencies of life; before a journey, or after a dream; in any discomposure of mind, or indisposition of body. In looking for auspicious signs, the soundness of the heart, the liver, and the lungs, is the chief object of attention; though the sparkling of the incense, and contortions of the smoke, are of some use in the enquiry; and the posture of the tail is not a little observed; for being twisted, it denotes a complicated case; if turned down, it betokens nothing but disaster and defeat; but lifted up, it is confided in as an undoubted signal of success.

If the victim goes freely to the place of sacrifice, it is esteemed a good omen. To try the temper he is in, they generally draw a knife along his body: if he not only bears this quietly, but consents by a nod, (which gracious mark of his approbation is commonly obtained by pouring a little water into his ear) it is immediately concluded, that the offering is acceptable, and the event of the business will be successful. So much stress is laid on this circumstance, that the Athenians in times of distress, have erected extemporary altars, where the victims of their own accord stooped in the procession; and here is a traditional story of a mad bull, that broke loose from ten men, and then tamely followed an old priestess to the place of sacrifice.

These rites are performed with great solemnity before a battle, the victims being adorned with crowns, flowers, and ribbons, and their horns often tipt with gold. But unless the omens be favourable, the Greeks will rather throw down their bucklers, and submit to the enemy, than by resisting be guilty of impiety and disobedience to the will of the Gods. MARDONIUS at such a juncture had like to have cut in pieces the whole body of forces under PAUSANIAS, had they not been animated by a sudden change of appearances, and made so violent a charge as the Persian army could not stand.

In dwelling on this subject I can hardly keep up a gravity, which it may seem to require; because I am persuaded, that the whole mystery of soothsaying, as it is here practised, is rather to be attributed to the contrivance of men, than the communication of the Gods; though it is with the utmost deference of judgment, that I offer my opinion to thee, venerable SMERDIS, who art so much better acquainted with the will and ways of providence. But from some instances, that have fallen under my notice I cannot help thinking, that it is a stratagem, by which selfish and artful men practice more safely on the credulity of the weak and well meaning. And I have often smiled at, though I could never credit a common report of our great philosopher's suggesting to the people, that a sneeze was an admonitory hint from his attendant dæmon. Doubtless those, who are concerned in the direction of civil or military affairs, have made, and do make great use of these strong persuasions, which omens generally produce, as they may accommodate them by a little dextrous management to serve any purposes they have in view. By this means they may baffle the best laid and most forward project, and throw a damp on the most active and enterprising spirits, By this they may raise a multitude to the most sanguine

expectations from the utmost depression of despair, and inspire them instantly with all the fire and fierceness of enthusiasm.

The self-interest of mankind, and their importance to themselves, would indeed have their share, both in producing and continuing this turn for divination; as it is a scheme, they might think, that would be often serviceable to their welfare, and which would always be flattering to their vanity. We are creatures made capable of and designed for happiness; we have therefore great quickness in discerning, and sensibility in feeling the several ways, by which it is or may be affected. This joined to our presumed significance, and the chief rank we hold in the visible creation, makes us imagine, that we are really as dear, and appear as considerable to every other being, as we do to ourselves; and that all the different ranks of inferior animals were made solely to administer to our pleasure, without any view of advancing their own. On this account we are apt to conclude, that all the business, which is transacting 'near us, has a particular regard to our mighty selves, till we come at length to interest heaven and earth so far in our preservation, as to suppose, that whatever is done, is principally designed to advertise us of any good or ill, that is likely to befall us.

These reflections have often led me to commiserate the hard lot of this superstitious people, who are thus taught to overlook the enjoyment of the present good, for the sake of those little fanciful elevations, which they have from the expectation of some future one, and when the real ills of life are so many, are exposed to a thousand adventitious distresses, that spring only from groundless apprehensions. The hoarse note of a raven is enough to

chill the warmest hopes of an Athenian, and make a public assembly, intent on the execution of the most necessary affairs, break up in confusion. Journies of business, which my friend PHILEMON and I had settled, have been often suspended on account of the unpropitious sight of a swallow; and many a party, of pleasure been interrupted by the ill-timed appearance of a hare or a weasel. I have sometimes ventured to argue with, or banter the good old man, on these occasions; but only found, that prejudices of this kind are impressed too deeply on the minds even of sensible and ingenious men, to be ever erased by reason or raillery. How much more agreeable to our nature and circumstances is the practice that is enjoined us in the pure and uncorrupted pages of the Zenda! "that we should take occasion every day, from the first animal we meet, to pay our grateful acknowledgments to the supreme source of light and happiness; who has produced such an amazing variety of creatures, provided sufficient means to make them happy, and yet made them all in some degree subservient to the use, and conducive to the welfare of man."

G.

L E T T E R C L V .

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

ON the first of this moon Scirrophorion, PHILOCLES, the Trierarch, arrived here express from the generals at Pylus, with the news, that the Athenian forces had made a descent on the island of Sphaacteria, and after a brisk engagement obliged the Lacedæmonian garrison to surrender themselves prisoners at discretion.

I have enclosed the most authentic detail of the whole affair, in a copy of the dispatch sent by CLEON and DEMOSTHENES, which has been read more than once in the assembly with repeated acclamations. From several strokes in it, I am satisfied, it could be drawn up by no one, but the enterprising son of CLEÆNETUS, who, whatever share of merit he may justly lay claim to in planning out the action, seems determined not to lose one tittle of applause for want of rhetoric in describing it. The rejoicings on this occasion are now at their height, accompanied by all those marks of rioting, which the multitude are apt to commit, when flushed with an unexpected success, which they ascribe to a general, who stands high in their esteem. The transport of the populace has exerted itself upon the houses of those citizens, who promoted the late negotiation; and their characters are made the subject of scholia or catches, adapted to the genius of the vulgar. Neither the humane super-

stitution of PHILEMON, the formality of DIODOTUS, nor the caution of NICIAS has escaped the low raillery of these political satyrists, whose rough licentious writings give one a strong idea of the times, when the great men of Greece were abused from the carts of THESPIS and his contemporaries.

I can assure thee, noble scribe, that this event is looked upon as the most extraordinary one, that has happened during the course of the war; for in the first place the most intelligent persons in Athens were so far from imagining, that CLEON's wild project would meet with success, that they rather expected every day to hear his shameful repulse. In the second place it was the universal opinion, that the Lacedæmonian detachment in Sphacteria, in imitation of the 300 at Thermopylæ, were determined to die in their ranks, after selling their lives so dear, as it would make the victory worth very little to the Athenians. But the issue of this affair has verified the old Græcian proverb, "The fortune of war is ever productive of novelties," since it is esteemed the most disgraceful blow the Lacedæmonians ever received, with the least loss to their enemies; and CLEON, whose military qualifications were never reckoned the shining part of his character, is now put on a level by his flatterers with the most celebrated captains of Greece for bravery and conduct. He is expected to arrive from Pylus in a few days. I shall take the first opportunity of communicating to him the rupture of the Lacedæmonian treaty, and endeavour to discover, whether the professions he made me before his expedition, of drawing this state into a closer alliance with ARTAXERXES, were sincere. If I find they were, I will persuade him to feel the pulse of the assembly upon that subject. His emissaries shall spread about the disposition, into which the haughti-

ness of Sparta has thrown our monarch, to cultivate the friendship of Athens; and insist on the reasonableness of softening the rigor of CIMON's peace, in order to obtain a powerful assistance, from Persia, which may in the present juncture decide the fate of the war. By this method the Lacedæmonian slowness may be quickened; and if the king perseveres in his design to take part with them, ARTAPHERNES will meet with the better reception. On the other hand, it will be seen, whether the Athenians really intend to make proposals of a strict confederacy to our court, or only contrive amusements, to prevent our joining with the Peloponnesian allies.

Thou mayest be satisfied that the Lacedæmonians will not think themselves much obliged to their ambassadors at Persopolis, for giving such entire credit to the first advices of an accommodation, as to break off the conferences in so abrupt and ridiculous a manner.

Instructions, which, like theirs, were to be interpreted according to the exigencies of affairs, should never be entrusted but to ministers of the greatest capacity and experience. And for my own part, I never thought negotiation the talent of the Spartans.

The republic of Athens is determined to push on the war vigorously, this summer. A fleet of eighty galleys is equipping with the utmost diligence, which is to be put under the command of NICIAS. The assembly have passed a vote, that a thousand citizens, (who are to be chosen by lot out of the tribes) and three hundred of the Hippeis, should hold themselves in readiness to embark at an hour's warning. They have likewise demanded af-

sistance from several of their allies. The expedition is intended against Corinth, either to land and take the city by surprize, or to make an attempt upon the shipping in the harbour; both which undertakings, however plausible they appear in the scheme that has been laid before the people, some experienced officers have assured me to be extremely difficult, if not impracticable. Letters are arrived from SOPHOCLES and EURYMEDON, who were sent with a fleet to Corcyra, the beginning of the summer. They gave an account, that having landed some companies of Athenian soldiers, the revolvers were beat out of their fastnesses; a fort, they had built on the mountain Ithome, stormed, and the greatest part of them obliged to surrender at discretion. The unfortunate men so taken were confined in a small island near Corcyra, till the people of Athens had pronounced sentence upon them, with an express condition, that if any attempted to escape, they should all be surrendered up to the Corcyrean magistrates. These terms were violated on the part of the captives; and the Athenian generals, without waiting for orders from hence, after putting them into the hands of the magistracy, pursued their voyage for Sicily. Advice is since come, that the latter, glad of the opportunity to extirpate every remnant of the aristocratical faction in Corcyra, condemned them all to death, and delivered them over to the insults and barbarity of the multitude. Such is the blind violence of party, wherever it prevails. May the extremes of it be avoided by every state, that would preserve its good sense, its liberties, and its humanity!

Before this reaches thy hands, thou wilt have received the dispatches, of which CHARICLES is the bearer; and I will presume to hope, thou art not unmindful of the request I presumed to make in them, that thou wouldst intercede

with the king for my return. Not to urge again the topic of the danger I run by a much longer continuance here, after practising with CLEON, I will just mention, that PYTHON has in his last letters to the senate informed them, that the Persian court has very exact intelligence, not only of the actions but the views and designs of this state, and frequently earlier and more important advices, than himself. I am sensible thou communicatest my dispatches to none but those of the supreme council; but canst thou so well answer for the fidelity of those, who give hourly attendance at thy palace? And as my letters are registered in the archives, the holy mage, who has the care of them may have no aversion to an Attic talent; and in that case an artful insinuating minister, like PYTHON, will find easy access within those venerable walls. Think not these suspicions founded entirely on my own chimerical reveries; for a friend of mine, who corresponds with PYTHON, shewed me a letter from him, in which he boasts, that "he had contracted an intimate acquaintance with one, who has it in his power to inform him of the most material passages at the court; and that he finds no places so secure in Persia, to which a gold key gives not the readiest access."

I will own freely to thee, illustrious scribe, that after having spent the earlier part of my life in acquiring a knowledge of the learning, manners, and language of distant nations, and almost seven years of it in the king's service here, I long impatiently to revisit my paternal farm in the vale of DIANA, near my native Ephesus. That shady retirement is of all others the best adapted to my inclinations, as it places one beneath the envy and resentment of the great, and above their dependance. 'Tis there I would finish my course in tranquillity, and live only to myself,

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praying for the welfare of the empire, the health of ARTAXERXES, and the happiness of my generous patron.

From Athens, the 3d of Metaginition.

P.

LETTER CLVI.

CLEON and DEMOSTHENES to the Senate and People of Athens.

BY our last letters, Athenians, you were informed, that the reinforcements under CLEON had joined your fleet before Sphacteria, and that it had been resolved to attempt landing, unless the Lacedæmonian generals consented, that their men in the island should be kept prisoners of war at Athens, till an accommodation was concluded. This proposal has been since made in form; and though visibly intended to prevent the farther effusion of Græcian blood, was rejected with disdain; answer being returned, that no Spartan ever came alive into the hands of his enemy. A reply so insolent and unseasonable had no other effect, than to inflame the zeal of the officers, and excite the courage and resentment of the soldiers. Accordingly, after giving a day's rest to the army, on the following night we set ashore eight hundred heavy-armed soldiers in the island, who surprised an advanced post of the Lacedæmonians, and either killed or took prisoners all, who were upon guard. The disposition for landing the rest of the forces was performed with such discipline and regularity, that before break of day they were all disembarked, without the

least opposition from the enemy. An accidental fire having a few days before consumed great part of the woods with which the island was overrun, made us less apprehensive of ambuscades, and gave us also an opportunity of discovering, that the number of the Lacedæmonians was greater than we imagined it to be; for which reason none but the Thalamitai * were left aboard the ships.

The troops began their march early in the morning in order of battle, the flanks, van, and rear being covered with small parties of the light armed, who were directed to harass the enemy, wherever they appeared, to scour the woods, and retire to the main body, in case they were pushed too vigorously. A large detachment of Spartans and Helots charged us at the opening of the defile, and put our avant-guard into some confusion; but our main body marching up to sustain them, and our peltastai and archers sorely galling the enemy from the higher grounds at the same time, they were obliged to retreat in tolerable good order towards the extremity of the island; where they took refuge in a fortification, which from the situation of the ground about it seemed in a manner impregnable. Here being joined to the rest of their men, they made so gallant and obstinate a defence, that our heavy-armed infantry were thrice repulsed. After several hours continual combat, your troops were almost spent with heat and fatigue; and we began to think, though unwillingly, of founding a retreat, when the commander of the Messenians proposed to us to attack them in the rear with a chosen party of the light-armed. We accepted this offer, and having given him eight hundred targetiers and archers, he found means, by conducting them through craggy nar-

* Rowers of the lower benches.

row passes, to appear in the rear of the Lacedæmonians, ready to fall upon them from that quarter, the situation of which alone they thought a sufficient security. We no sooner observed this, than we ordered a herald to proclaim aloud in the front of our lines, that if the enemy would lay down their arms, they should be admitted to capitulate. The words were scarce pronounced, before we saw most of those on the ramparts throw down their weapons, and hold up their hands in token of assent. A suspension of hostilities immediately ensued, and it was desired by STRYPHON, their commanding officer, that leave should be given him to send to the Lacedæmonians before Pylus for instructions. But we only allowed him to call an herald out of the camp, who, standing on the opposite shore, (which is but a very small distance from the island) was acquainted with the necessities of the garrison, and in a few hours, returned, and declared to them in the name of AGIS and his council of war, that they had permission to consult for their safety, provided they did nothing unworthy of the Spartan name. Upon this the besieged delivered up their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners, stipulating only, that they should be used with humanity. The number of Lacedæmonian captives are above three hundred; the whole number originally sent over into Sphacteria was four hundred and twenty, all picked men.

After obtaining this glorious success, we offered up, according to the pious custom of our ancestors, a sacrifice out of the first fruits of the spoils to JUPITER and MINERVA the counsellors, the tutelar deities of this state. We likewise set up a trophy on a rising ground, which affords a fair prospect of the enemies camp. We intend to begin embarking our army with the prisoners, and the rest of the booty to-morrow; and shall then reinforce the gar-

rison of Pylus, and take the first favourable wind to sail for Athens.

We think ourselves bound in justice to assure you, that the whole army, as well officers as soldiers, in their respective capacities, behaved with as much skill, valour, and intrepidity, as were ever shewn by any troops, on any occasion whatsoever; and we recommend to your notice more particularly, for their gallant conduct, PHILOCLES, the son of LACHES, the bearer of these dispatches, LAMACHUS captain of the Peltastai, and THERAMENES Trierach of the Nereids. As to the victory itself, we know not, Athenians, whether it may become us, who were unworthy instruments of obtaining it, to anticipate the impartial judgment you will form of it by adding our own. But in justification of your two generals, one of whom undertook for the success of this measure, in a manner that might appear too presumptuous, and the other both advised the descent, and assisted to the best of his abilities in making the necessary dispositions for it, give us leave to say a few words; that considering the courage and obstinacy of the garrison, and the advantage in point of situation and knowledge of the island with which they fought, we believe your forces never gained a completer advantage, with less loss, and more honour to themselves; in sight of an enemy's camp, superior in number, which looked on as unconcerned spectators of the combat. Certainly the consequences to be drawn from it must be very beneficial, if you persist in refusing to hearken to the counsels of those, who would effect, by a disgraceful peace, what the united strength of your enemies is not able to compass.

From our Camp in the island of Sphacteria, the 25th of the moon Hekatombéon.

P.

L E T T E R CLVII.

CLEANDER TO CRATIPPUS.

THE people of Athens are so elated by the victory at Sphacteria, that they have ordered as many Hermæ to be made in honour of it, as were set up after the defeat of the Medes at Strymon. My curiosity led me the other day into the portico, where they are to be placed. "I suppose," said I, to a friend, who was with me, the state takes this opportunity to pay some acknowledgment to DEMOSTHENES, the instrument of its success against the Spartans, by inscribing his name with a recital of the action on the bases of those statues; an acknowledgment suited to one of his elegant mind, who is equally sensible and deserving of applause." "By no means, answered he; it is never usual on these occasions to mark any name but that of the people." "Methinks, returned I, your practice is an odd one. Why, you pay more honour to the trifling feats of activity or strength performed at your solemn entertainments, than to the wisdom and virtue of those officers, who decide the fate of your country! The Athenians must have a very high opinion of their fellow citizens, to think they are so much the servants of the public, as to endanger their reputation, without even the hope of this fantastical reward. Or you must permit me to have a very mean opinion of the Athenians, if the passion of envy can infect a nation, to the prejudice of the few who distinguished themselves.

“ You are mistaken, interrupted my friend, in imputing it to the envy and jealousy of the Athenians, not to their wisdom and magnanimity, that they are fond of public monuments, but sparing in private memorials. I have thought the first often preferable to the last, since they are addressed to a whole nation, and may be regarded as an incentive to virtue by the meanest, as well as the most elevated mind. When it is said (for instance) on some of them, that the people fought valiantly and successfully for their liberties, can one of the finest education, of the greatest quality or fortune, infer any thing less from it, than that it become him to be the foremost in such contests? Or can the most uncultivated fail of being reminded, that, though he acts in a little sphere, his life is a debt to his country, which must be paid, whenever she demands it? But when a statue is erected, or an inscription drawn up, to the honour of a private character, it makes an impression upon few,—To attain such exalted merit is above the reach, and to desire it, is beyond the wishes of most men; so that while the name of a people excites a general spirit of enthusiasm, the memorial of one genius excites only the emulation of another. Like an esoteric treatise of philosophy, it may fall in the way of the vulgar; but they cannot understand it, or improve by it, because calculated for men of speculation; whereas the public monuments are like popular essays, more universally useful and intelligible.

To turn the argument in another light. Would it not be inconsistent with that equality of rank, which should be carefully maintained in a free government, to bestow distinctions of this nature too frequently, even on those who are eminent? Can any more effectual way be taken to inspire a love of our country, or to suppress the gentle risings of vanity, than to let it be known to every man of

parts, than it is a matter of strict duty, to be active in the common service. That what he performs with credit in the field is owing partly to the tutelar deities of the state, partly to the valour of his soldiers, and the experience of his officers; and after all, fortune take a considerable share of praise from him. That on these accounts he has no claim to crowns of gold, statues, or inscriptions. Yet, were the contrary practice observed, which you zealously recommend, the opportunities, which such pre-eminence would afford its possessors, of comparing themselves with their countrymen, would intoxicate some with a dangerous, and others with a silly pride; so that he, who arrived to these glories, and had good talents, would in reality erect himself into the monarch of the state; while one of meaner endowments would in fancy be so superior to the rest of his plain fellow citizens, that the gift of them would be a certain prejudice to the man, and render him strangely ridiculous. We may add further, that as the best understandings are not proof against the giddiness, which attends honours; so great honesty may be corrupted by a facility of procuring them; and they will be sought for in the quarrels of faction, not contested in the race of virtue."

I was not willing, CRATIPPUS, to hold a controversy with my friend, and yielded to him. From a trifling particular concerning the Hermæ, which the state is now erecting, our conversation rambled into general topics; and the longer we talked, the more we lost sight of what we first disputed. At last I said, "How disproportioned is the number of possible methods for preserving fame to those of acquiring it! an argument that we ought not to concern ourselves about its duration after death. If it has served our turn, while we lived, we should not eagerly intrude it upon the stage to the disturbance of the characters that suc-

ceed us; since it seems a sort of busy impertinence to aim at ingrossing the attention of posterity. Commemorative pillars and inscriptions are undoubtedly the best records of antiquity, as they are more lasting, and less liable to alteration than tradition. In the first ages an unhewn stone was often placed on the spot, where some remarkable transaction had passed; but the knowledge of its occasion could only be had from the memory and reports of the inhabitants. This imperfect means of giving information to succeeding times was afterwards improved, by sketching out a barbarous representation of the story on rough columns; the design of which, in a course of years, was only to be gathered from conjecture, till letters introduced an historical certainty. HERODOTUS has extracted much of his history from the marbles furnished him by the priests of Ægypt; and it is to these we are indebted for our acquaintance with the celebrated conquerors, SESOSTRIS, HERCULES, and BACCHUS." "And truly, interposed my friend, I would willingly part with their acquaintance. I am sorry we were ever possessed of their names, or their examples. The love of praise soon put us on contrivances for transmitting it to our descendants; and most of the ancient monuments perpetuate the glory of particular great men, but scarce any are of the national kind I have commended. So that I am apt to fancy, they were not so much erected by the veneration of contemporaries for exalted merit, as by the personal vanity of oppressors." "I believe, returned I, the national monuments, which are your favourites, were never thought of, till mankind had wisdom and courage enough to form civil societies upon principles of liberty. Before that time whatever credit the subject acquired, was unjustly assumed by the prince. But are you not of opinion however seldom these marks of honour should be bestowed by the public on individuals, yet if a statue or inscription were now and then put up by the respect of private fa-

milies to their distinguished relations, that such memorials might be useful?" "Could we rely, answered he, on the impartiality of friends, and were the voice of dependants as disinterested as that of the public, I would agree with you. Otherwise, if these eulogies become cheaply prostituted to the purposes of servility, and in the opinion of every man shall exceed the merit of the character they celebrate, they will be attended with the most hurtful consequences. The generality, when they find the lives of the great not at all correspondent to the laboured commendations of them, will conclude the perfection set forth there to be unattainable and ideal: for the difference is the same, between the impression made by descriptions of what ought to have been, and what has been, as it is between that of precept and example. Poetry in its original was set apart to do honour to the gods and heroes; but that degeneracy, which infects all human things, has spared not the sacred arts; and perhaps inscriptions may one day be admired for the delicacy and sprightliness, not the truth and simplicity of the encomium." "Then, said I, by Jupiter, I could curse the invention of letters, which must submit to convey so much flattery to succeeding times. After all, if no man ought to wish for posthumous fame, except the imitation of his character might be of real service to the world, then it is weakness to think of it on our own account. If the vicious share it here in common with the virtuous, and sometimes men of low understanding with men of parts, then he, who has qualified himself to deserve it, should not lament those accidents of nature or fortune, that deprive him of it. In a word, if the opinion of philosophers be just, that there is another state of moral designation, we may expect, that MINOS, ÆACUS, and RHADAMANTH, will reverse all the false judgments that have been passed in this; and while they condemn monarchs and ministers to eternal oblivion, will call out, to the observation of innumerable

beings, many wise and good men, who were either unknown or forgotten.

C.

L E T T E R CLVIII.

CLEANDER TO HYDASPES.

I remember to have given thee an account some time since of the character of EURIPIDES. It is with pleasure I can acquaint thee now, that, by the means of SOCRATES, I am admitted into his esteem and confidence. He entertained me the other day with a play he has written on the fate of ORESTES, after the murder of his mother; which is wrought up with all the interesting circumstances, which the imagination of the poet, or the passions of human nature, can afford. As soon as the distress is raised to the height, and the expectation of the spectator with it, APOLLO descends from heaven in the last scene; and when you look for confusion, misery, and bloodshed, puts an end to it, to the satisfaction of all parties. "Nothing, said I, can be finer or more affecting than this performance: and yet I own myself no friend to what you poets call "the Deity from the machine." 'Tis true, here is a difficulty worthy of his presence; nevertheless I am better pleased to see things unravelled by the ordinary operation of second causes, than by a sudden interposition. The Gods, you know, may do any thing; and though I can trust them in the hands of so judicious a writer as yourself, I am in pain,

whenever they are introduced on the stage, lest they should do a great deal more than their business. The practice therefore should be discouraged; and methinks I am unwilling, it should have the sanction of your example. Could you have managed the story before us, as you have done some others, the whole would have been of a piece, and the tragedy would have concluded with as much nature as it is conducted." "If you consider the plot, answered EURIPIDES, you will find it impossible to have turned it otherwise. And to speak my sentiments with freedom, when the play is drawing to a close, the attention of the audience on the rack, unable to divine the consequences, it is an agreeable surprize to bring things at once to an happy issue, and send them away in good temper. Such pieces make a deeper impression on the mind, than those, in which you are prepared before-hand for the event. I entirely approve what you say concerning the cœlestial machinery of the theatre. And we may observe they are the fondest of it, who shew in every line a remarkable poverty of invention, but value themselves on a fruitful fancy, because their Deities appear in all the wantonness of miracles. In truth, how can the frequent recourse to this machinery be an instance of genius? It had its birth from simple necessity, and should be used only in the last extremity; yet (like several of the arts of life, which were equally mean in their original) has been applied to the purposes of elegance and ornament. Believe me, I should be sorry to deserve the censure." "Mistake me not, returned I:---To censure you as a lover of these extravagancies, who are the truest master and observer of nature in the drama, would be as ridiculous, as to upbraid SOCRATES with the follies of the Sophist. You may be convinced then, that, if I have common sense, I could not mean it; and, upon recollection, I am persuaded, there is no way of finishing your ORESTES, but that which you

have chosen." "I was fully possessed of your meaning, replied he, yet am obliged to you for your polite manner of explaining it. At the same time I take it as a proof of friendship, that you communicate every remark, which occurs to you at first reading, even though it be crude and inaccurate. I assure you it pleases me to find, that my tragedy is exempted from the imputation you have justly thrown upon many others. If I do not deceive myself, it is of that kind, which alone renders the descent of a God excusable, (since I think it can in no case be commendable) and may be vindicated, as well from the affection of the spectators for the wonderful, as from the reasons I have mentioned." "I wish, interrupted I, you would forbear appealing to the vicious taste of the times in your defence, especially when you are supported by better arguments." "You may laugh at it, said he, but it is of considerable weight. A dramatick writer, and a popular orator, are nearly in the same circumstances. They must each of them consult the humour of their contemporaries; or else they will never have an hearing; and impartial posterity must make allowances."

"The affection for the wonderful, continued I, prevails very strongly in the present age. And those, who are desirous to enjoy reputation, while they live, always sacrifice the maturest result of their own judgment, in accommodation to the caprice of their countrymen. HERODOTUS has interwoven some of the traditional romances of antiquity into his narration from that powerful motive. The schools of the sophists and philosophers abound in allegories. The theatre, instead of exhibiting to us stories of an established date, or undoubted authority, (such as the banishment of PISISTRATUS's family from Athens) is altogether conversant with the heroes and demi-gods of fable."

“ You would gladly, answered EURIPIDES, bring history upon the stage, as it might give a fair opportunity for enforcing the principles of liberty, and a love of our country. But in some instances the nature of tragedy, and in all the temper of the Athenians forbids it. The nature of tragedy cannot bear it, because there are many incidents, which, though they entertain in the relation, are too unanimated and uninforming, or too disagreeable and shocking in the particulars, to compose a play. As nothing can be more spirited than a battle in the action, and yet nothing colder in the description; so, on the contrary, many things please in the historical description, which would disgust in real life, or the mimic representation. It is for this reason, that in modelling a piece for the theatre, we are frequently obliged to vary the plot of it from the truth, for the better disposition and improvement of it; a licence, which, however it may be indulged in fictitious subjects, would, I am afraid, be denied in historical. The temper of the Athenians would not bear it, because those facts and characters, which seem best suited to the scenes of a tragic writer, are too recent in the memory, and too much engage the passions of private families, to be properly introduced upon the stage.” “ Suppose then, said I, you should resort to Sparta, or even Persia, for the topics of tragedy. I presume the Athenians are not divided in their sentiments on the eminent men of those countries.” “ In that case, replied he, it would be surmised, that I paid a disrespect to the heroes of our own republic. So that the way to be free from all difficulties, is to confine ourselves to the fabulous ancestors of the colonies, which first planted Greece. The only poet, who ever dared at a performance of the cast, which you recommend, was *ÆSCHYLUS*, the bold inventor of the drama. But you must remember, that

what he wrote, had nothing to do with individuals*. It contained no flattery to THEMISTOCLES or ARISTIDES. It entered into no encomium on their valour and conduct: it took no notice of their laying aside all private resentments, to unite in the cause of their country, (the most instructive lesson of that important war) but was a general compliment to the Grecians. Nay, to avoid the odium, which personal commendations would draw upon the writer, and to keep off that envy, which would have fallen on the objects of them, he laid the scene as far as he could from Athens, in the very palace of XERXES. Should I, for instance, accept the subject you propose, different parties in the state would take alarm; the one protecting, the other reviling me; and while I may have all men applaud, it would be preposterous to aim at the praises of a few. You will grant PISISTRATUS must be drawn extremely amiable, or extremely odious; for in the mixt state his character would be unassuming and dull. Were I to set him in the former light, I should be thought secretly affected to slavery, a teacher of dangerous principles; and though it were the best performance I had produced, the very turn of the thing would condemn it. Were I to place him in the latter point of view, it would flatter the prejudices of the people, but contradict my own sentiments, and the sentiments of men of sense, and do an injustice to the man. For he was a lover of lenity, letters, and politeness; nor was Athens happier at any time, than under his government. Should I descend nearer to our own days, and, agreeably to the scheme you offer, found a tragedy on some remarkable action of THEMISTOCLES, CIMON, or PERICLES, think you not it would be to wage war with the ill-nature of

* See the *Persians*, a play of ÆSCHYLUS, written seven years after the defeat of XERXES's forces at Mycale.

enemies, and the partiality of friends?" "You amaze me, returned I; it seems frequent enough with you poets, to use sentiments and expressions alluding to the circumstances and persons of the present times without scruple. Then why are you so careful, not to give offence in the plot of a play, as that it must be far fetched from antiquity?" "I can tell you, said EURIPIDES, those allusions you speak of are as much as the people will either approve or forgive. But if we were to strike once out of the province of fable, and bring the stories of the time upon the stage, the rulers of the assembly would grow jealous, and imagine we aimed at transferring the seat of business and advice from the forum to the theatre. Even the comic poets, the privileged satyrists of the state, are often not so gross as to speak plainly, but intimate their scurrility by uncouth and extravagant allegories." "Would not the Athenians, replied I, be pleased to see the great geniuses the commonwealth has brought forth, exhibited in their public entertainments, as it must reflect an honour on themselves?" "I think it appears, said he, from the observations already made, that they would, on such occasions, be greatly divided in their sentiments. Besides, the subjects we chuse are not deficient in this particular; for they are generally taken from the lives of the founders of our cities, and in reciting the misfortunes or prosperity of their families, we may be considered as doing credit to their descendants. Such tragedies are free from the exceptions, to which those you wish for are exposed, and give equal scope to the invention and œconomy of the poet." "I only wish, rejoined I, to see fable banished from the theatre." "I agree with you, said he; but there is no running counter to the taste and opinion of the age. The tragic writings, however, are not to be reproached with wildness. They are like the fictions which they treat of; a mixture of falsehood and truth, of absurdity and credibility. For I must be so candid as to

confess, though our audiences are fond of fables, yet they love to have the natural graces of conversation enter into the dialogues even of fabulous characters; to see the real passions, and probable incidents of human life, wrought upon the ground-work of the marvellous.

EURIPIDES's defence of the Greek theatre, noble sa-
trap, was amusing, but not attended with all the conviction
which I wanted. Let it be allowed, that, such is the con-
stitution of Athens, it would add to the disorders of its ci-
tizens, if their best historical subjects, which are contained
within the late flourishing period of their affairs, were in-
troduced on the stage: but it can never be admitted, that
these afford not more room for the skill, and less exalt the
spirit of the writer, than the unnatural relations of mytho-
logists. No, HYDASPES, the inimitable CYRUS, whom
history and Persia boast, is far beyond the THESEUS and
HERCULES of fable. Persuaded as thou art of this truth,
refine on the model of the Greeks, and build a theatre
within the walls of Susa. With a view to encourage the
project, I have drawn up a rough sketch of the plot for a
tragedy, in the manner of SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES,
founded on the story of CROESUS, and the taking of Sardis.
If thou approvest it, thou mayest put it into the hands of
THIAMIS the mage, who is a good poet, and well versed
in their writings. In the mean time suffer me to congratu-
late thee, on the honour which will accrue to thyself,
by raising the great characters of thy country from the
tomb of time; and on the ascendant thou wilt gain over
thy master, by insinuating those lessons of policy and virtue
in the presence of his court and people, which MEGABY-
ZUS suggested with equal art and sincerity in the closet, or
the council-chamber.

CYRUS in Sardis.

A C T. I.

The chorus is composed of Sardians. The scene lies in CROESUS's palace. Before day-break.

The queen appears on the stage, expressing her anxiety for her lord, who went out in the middle of the night on an alarm from the Persian camp. She prays, that the good fortune, which accompanied CYRUS in the day of THYMBREA, when he totally defeated the Lydian army, may fail him before Sardis. A messenger enters; relates the taking of the city, CROESUS's danger, his escape, the violent effort that caused his dumb son to speak. The queen recollects the oracle, which declared, that the young prince should never be cured of that natural defect, till the day of his father's misfortunes; is in despair: the chorus comforts her, and concludes with reciting the change of CROESUS's fortune, describes his extensive power and riches, the confidence reposed in him by the kings confederated against CYRUS, and the steps which led to his ruin.

A C T. II.

CROESUS retired into his palace, comes in disordered with the different passions of fear, indignation, and sorrow; calls to mind several prodigies; doubts, whether he shall

yield to the conqueror, or, like SARDANAPALUS, take a resolution to destroy himself. His queen exhorts him to the former. After some discourse, he forbids her to interpose her advice. She withdraws. CROESUS accuses the deceitfulness of APOLLO, who seduced him, by ambiguous answers, to cross the river Halys. The chorus counsels him to submit. They dispute of resignation to the Gods. The king eagerly enquires after the ambassadors, whom he had sent * with iron fetters to the oracle, in token of the return made him for his religious donations. The chorus reproaches him with temerity; asks him what purpose this deputation could serve. He answers, to require an explicit interpretation of the prophecies transmitted to him, and to upbraid APOLLO with ingratitude. Goes out to try what may be done for the defence of his citadel and palace. The chorus entreats him not to flatter himself with foolish hopes, sings of a vain curiosity into future events, and laments the plunder of Sardis, with the various injuries to which the fate of war exposes its inhabitants.

A C T III.

An officer from CYRUS, passing by the station of the chorus, inquires after CROESUS, saying, that he is commanded with a chosen band of soldiers to seize his person. The chorus prepares resistance, unwilling to inform him. He uses threats, and tells them, that they are all in the hands of the victor. After a little altercation, they direct him to an apartment in the palace. He goes out, and soon returns with CROESUS bound. The king seems speechless, and in the utmost amazement. The officer acquaints him,

* Vid. HERODOT. L. I.

he must be offered as a * sacrifice to the guardian Deities of Persia. He recovers himself; at first exclaims against the cruelty of CYRUS, but conversing a little with the chorus, he is softened; reflects on the happy circumstance of not out-living his prosperity. The chorus parts from him affectionately. He follows the officer. The chorus insinuates, agreeably to an old oracle, that CROESUS suffers for the iniquity of GYGES his ancestor; and closes with a few strophes on the use of adversity to subdue the passions and improve the understanding.

A C T IV.

The queen in confusion is impatient to know the particulars of CROESUS's being taken. The chorus extols his magnanimity of behaviour. She suggests a thousand indignities, which may have been offered him, with many turns of passion. One comes in, and tells her at large, what has happened at the pyle, on which CROESUS was to have been burnt; mentions the invocation of SOLON, the sudden shower that extinguished the flames; informs her, that CYRUS and CROESUS are moving to the palace. [This story will admit a noble description.] The queen rejoices at the interposition of the Gods in favour of the king; but unable to bear the sight of the conqueror, and doubtful, whether he may not punish her husband in another manner, resolves to keep out of the way. The chorus sings a panegyric on the wisdom of SOLON, and vindicates the justice of heaven, which always rewards piety, though late.

* Vide HERODOT. L. I.

A C T V.

CYRUS appears followed by his chief officers, CROESUS, and the fourteen Lydian youths devoted with him. In entering he orders his attendants to dedicate a tenth of the spoils to the God; then he turns to CROESUS, who kneels. CYRUS blames him for having broken his alliance unjustly, and with hearkening to bad counsellors; but forgives and honours him on account of the miracle, which was seemingly wrought for his preservation. CROESUS makes no answer. In the mean while the ambassador returns from Delphi, who, interrogated by CYRUS of his errand, repeats the Pythian priestess's interpretation of those oracles concerning the mule, and the destruction of a mighty empire, by crossing the river Halys. CROESUS acknowledges the fault to be his, in relying on his own sagacity to explain them; declares to CYRUS, that he is now arrived at that knowledge, which he thought himself before possessed of, and from whence the God told him he should date the period of his happiness, the knowledge of himself. CYRUS is warned from the example of CROESUS's fall to preserve that temper of mind in prosperity, which is usually learnt from the reverse of it; promises him safety and protection; and receives him into confidence. The chorus concludes the whole, with praising the exploits, the clemency, the character of CYRUS, as worthy the empire of the world; and wishes, that the luxury of Asia may not enervate the manners of the Persians.

C.

L E T T E R CLIX.

SMERDIS to CLEANDER. From Balch.

THE spirit of philosophy is free, and recommends the confronting one opinion with another, that the force of each may better be discerned, and truth emerge from the comparison. This, CLEANDER, can be no offence to friendship, since it is only the exercise of reason. Every man does it in his own breast, when he least thinks of it; he, as it were, divides himself, propounds and rejects, argues and confutes; and, though the point remain undetermined, the mind is pleased with the operation, and wants no persuasion to be reconciled to itself. The transition is easy to the disputes of friends, which should be raised and laid aside with as little appearance of animosity. If a difference of sentiment arise betwixt thee and me, arguments may remove, or friendship must tolerate it. I assure thee, thy mistakes have always been such, as I not only could bear, but almost thought amiable, because they flowed from some generous principle carried a little too far.

Such were thy thoughts concerning oracles and divination, which thou persuadest thyself are mere human frauds, the better to vindicate the divine conduct, and prescribe narrower bounds to the dominion of AHRIMAN. But it cannot be denied, that certain presages have been fulfilled by very distant events, which lay beyond the reach of all human foresight. In answer to this thou wilt tell me, that

innumerable others have never been verified; and that all together they are but mere conjectures, which, like seed thrown up into the air at random, have the large field of time to fall into, and it is no wonder, if some few should come to maturity. Are we then to suppose, that the Bœotians, who are held in contempt for their dulness, should have been able to carry on so gainful a delusion, and counterfeit inspiration so successfully? Is it to be imagined, that men, not thought to abound in common sense, should daily pronounce such things, as not only pass upon private men, but princes and states, as dictated by the God of wisdom and eloquence? Yes; thou art convinced this must be the truth; for OROMASDES will not permit AHRIMAN and his accursed ministers, by ambiguous answers, to lead men into error. If thou sayest so, because of the ill consequences of such error, why does he then permit it at all; since those are the same, whether it arise from the imposition of men, or the craft of ARIMANIUS? But do not men, who love error, deserve to meet with it; every wicked man is a lover of error; he wishes not to see truth, which reproaches him, but is attentive to any soothing falsehood, that gives a gloss to his conduct. If then a rapacious monarch, or an ambitious state, would make unreasonable encroachments upon its neighbours, and wants no more than the sanction of an oracle to justify its attempts; does it not deserve the delusion it seeks for, and to be lead into ruin (which is commonly the event) by some specious prodigy or presage? This was the very case of that unfortunate prince of Lydia. When he was brought before his conqueror in chains, he apologized for his conduct, in that it had been altogether directed by the Delphic oracle. CYRUS did not upbraid his royal captive with credulity for supposing such a di-

vining power ; but he blamed his confidence in any power, which could authorize ambition or avarice, and give countenance to illegal invasions ; things opposed by the standing oracles of reason, which OROMASDES has set up in the human mind.

I cannot, like thee, doubt the reality of divination, though I do not think it of great extent. I know the book of fate is in the custody of OROMASDES ; and that time alone is permitted leisurely to unfold it us. Nevertheless we cannot be insensible of the natural sagacity of evil spirits, who may collect many events, which depend on the regular operations of nature, as a physician can foretel a disease or death sometimes, by certain symptoms, that are the forerunners of them. Those dæmons therefore may be allowed to foresee many vicissitudes of fortune, in states, as well as particular persons ; but when they pretend to reveal these things to mortals, they do wisely in wrapping them up in words of ambiguous import, because they can never be certain of what still depends on the will of the Deity. And that this is their practice I make no doubt ; for as the mind is no sooner disposed to swerve from truth, than it is seconded by the suggestions of AHRIMAN, we cannot suppose he would fail to support so extensive an instrument of error, as the public oracles of Greece. He inspires a knowledge of some hidden truths the better to propagate numerous falsehoods, and establish his kingdom among men. The end is worthy the ambition of AHRIMAN ; the means bear all the marks of a superior intelligence, which dares contend even with the highest. And would it not be as impious to say, that these strong delusions flowed altogether from the operations of the human mind, as that external evil took its rise from the un-

depraved laws of nature, and the original design of OROMASDES ?

Thou knowest, when man was formed, the last of the divine works, the Creator spoke thus to AHRIMAN in disdain : " Be thou no longer my competitor ; I have formed one from the dust of the earth to contend with thee." Immediately the evil-one called together his ministeral spirits : " Observe, says he, this new system formed from separable parts, and therefore capable of dissolution ; mix and confound the elements of it ; blend together such materials, as have antipathy betwixt them ; and search out the seeds of corruption. If you cannot stop the earth's fertility, pervert it to the ruin of its inhabitants." Instantly they divide the task ; they pollute the air with unwholesome vapours ; they compress winds within the caverns of the earth, and kindle subterraneous fires, which should afterwards break through their confinement, to the terror and destruction of whole cities and provinces. They cherished and gave increase to the caterpillar and locust ; the basest insects, and the most hurtful animals, which were intended only to gather the refuse and waste fertility of the ground, but now make the cultivation of it necessary, and even rob the husbandman of his labours. These dæmons proceeded so far, as to impregnate the vast body of waters with salts, that, instead of allaying the thirst, they might increase it. But here the heavenly spirits interposed ; they saved the springs and the rivers, and set themselves upon all the counterworks of benevolence.

AHRIMAN was thus checked in his career ; but he had a dangerous engine still in reserve. " ASHMUG, said he, (who is the most malignant and insinuating spirit of

his train) do thou inspire man with error." This was the most fatal attack, which only the wise and virtuous can sustain; an evil, which the benign spirits of heaven cannot forcibly relieve us from, without an injury to our nature. Hence it rages uncontrouled, and men themselves become the instruments to propagate it, and accomplices with AHRIMAN; but above all, those are his ministers, his public votaries, and avowed priests, who attend his shrines for the spirit of divination, receive his influence in dreams, and vend his delusive oracles. Farewel.

H.

L E T T E R CLX.

GOBRYAS to CLEANDER. From Persepolis.

BY the arrival of CHARICLES (who hath made extraordinary haste in his journey) with your dispatches, we were freed entirely from that uncertainty and expectation, which have given us many uneasy moments since we first heard, that a negotiation was set on foot at Athens with such probability of success. As the affair has ended, we admire the critical juncture in which you received your instructions, and much more your abilities and dexterity in the safe and effectual management of so nice and intricate a business. The sense our master has of the important service you have thereby done the empire, is best set forth in a royal mandate, which was immediately sent to PISUTHNES, directing him to assign the annual revenues of three large villages near Sardis for the perpetual maintainance of CLEANDER the Ephesian, and his heirs, "in consideration, as well of his extraordinary merits, as of some remarkable services he has performed at the hazard of his safety, the memory of which (adds the order) will live for ever in the chronicles of Persia." Even some, who hitherto have not shewn themselves your friends, are not deficient in doing you justice on this occasion. What then, my CLEANDER, dost thou think is the behaviour of those, who love and esteem thee, who have protected thee from calumny, and answered for thy fidelity and resolution

to the face of thy enemies? Let me appeal to thine own heart, how thou canst imagine mine was affected on this event? I am sure no words I can use, will express half the satisfaction I feel on thy own and the public account.

Before I enter upon any new matter, give me leave to say a little with regard to the apprehensions you seem to be under, after having meddled in so dangerous an intrigue, and your earnest desire to be recalled. As to the first of these points, thou mayst be extremely secure, that a secret of this nature is entrusted to very few ears. To deal plainly with thee, only two of the king's ministers besides myself are acquainted with it; and care is taken, that the correspondence relating to this business shall not be registered in the archives, till a proper series of years be elapsed, when posterity may benefit by the example, and the persons of those concerned be removed from the reach of danger. Nor can I think, that CLEON, however designing and treacherous he may naturally be, will lose the advantages he has reason to expect from the king's friendship, in order to sacrifice thee at any time to the resentment of the Athenians; particularly if thou art careful in managing his capricious humour; and soothing his vanity. As to the second point, the king directed me to tell you, that your experience in the affairs Greece is so necessary for his service at this juncture, that he cannot think of your return home; but that he will, however, endeavour to render your employment as secure as possible, by sending you a private commission, sealed with his own signet, to be his agent at Athens, which, he believes, that state will, in case of any accident, pay some respect to. For my own part, I am persuaded, thy zeal for thy master's suc-

cess, and thy submission to his pleasure, will not permit thee to repine at a delay, which thy love for retirement may, perhaps, think likely to prove a long one. One thing I can assure thee, that since thou art so much bent upon a private life, I will endeavour to put an end to thy ministerial capacity, the moment I am convinced it will be no detriment to the public.

The commissioners of the marine, have, at last, settled a project of a commercial treaty with PYTHON, who has sent it by an express to Athens for the ratification of the assembly. I enclose a copy of it for thy private use. Thou wilt observe, that the sum stipulated for reparation of damages is not a large one; but it is a sufficient acknowledgment on the part of the republic, that many of their captures were unwarrantable, and is as much as we could, in reason, insist upon; for it will always be found impossible in complaints of this nature, when two states negotiate on equal terms, to satisfy the pretensions of particular persons, which are usually estimated at an extravagant rate, without giving up points of a more national concern. I believe the clauses, which relate to the confirming and settling the privileges, and regulating the behaviour of the Athenian traders in our ports, and the Phœnician and Ægyptian merchants in theirs, will meet with a pretty general approbation, as being alike beneficial and fair for all parties. But there is one article, which may prove of a more difficult digestion, as it interferes with the private gains of their sea-captains, and must therefore be strenuously maintained by us; and the king has declared to PYTHON, that the rejecting or altering it will overturn the whole affair.

The purport of the article, which I allude to, is, that the Athenian gallies shall not visit our trading vessels, within any greater distance than two leagues of an enemy's port; and then the commanding officer shall call for and examine the master's bill of lading and pass from the præfect of the marine, to which he shall give entire credit; and in case he finds any prohibited commodities, as arms and ammunition, on board, they alone shall be confiscated, and the ship suffered to proceed on its voyage without farther arrest or molestation.

This regulation goes to the root of so many evils and abuses, and is so agreeable to natural justice, and the law of nations, that I am persuaded, you need no arguments I can furnish you with, to defend it against any objections, which CLEON can make to it. You must exert all your influence, and all the weight of the king's authority, to procure his interest and concurrence towards obtaining the ratification of an article, which is looked upon here as the basis and ground-work of the whole.

I will add nothing farther on this head, than that if overtures should be thrown out of mixing any matters in this treaty, but such as have been already brought into dispute, you must put an absolute negative upon them, and say, that a proposal of that nature would be very ill resented here.

I am not at all surprized, that the news of our treating with the Spartan ambassadors, gave an alarm at Athens. By this time it will be pretty well over; but I think CLEON very ill grounded in representing it as a

breach of faith in us to treat with their enemies, when he knows what difficulties would have attended a closer alliance with Athens, and how much the king has reason to resent several proceedings of his countrymen. Upon the whole, I think with you, that his warmth was rather affected than real; and that he is too strongly attached to his own interest, to part in haste with the protection and support, which it is in the king's power to afford him in any reverse of fortune. Upon his return from his expedition, you may acquaint him, that the conferences with the Lacedæmonians are entirely closed; that it would have been want of common respect towards the Spartan republic, not to have given a fair hearing, at least, to what their ambassadors had to lay before us; but that their offers were so unreasonable, that the king could not be persuaded to unite his arms against a state, for which (however ill advised towards him their conduct had lately been) he still preserves a great share of esteem and confidence. You may add, that it will now be his own fault, if he does not shew by his actions, that he is sincere in his wishes, to effect a nearer conjunction with Persia. And for his farther encouragement to labour in so good a work, you may assure him, that there is at present nothing in agitation to their prejudice with the Lacedæmonians, or any other of their enemies. In short, the whole drift of your discourse must be, to engage him to enter into a debate with you, on some particular proposals for a treaty, which, if you can settle between yourselves, may afterwards be moved in the senate, as a proper ground-work for a negotiation at Susa the ensuing winter. But you must always insist upon the repeal of the two articles in CIMON's peace (so often mentioned) as a condition, without which the king will hearken to nothing. With

regard to the proportion of succours on both sides, you must follow, as near as may be, the project delivered in by the king's commissioners to the Spartan ambassadors, a copy of which was contained in my last dispatch. One caution it is necessary you should be apprised of, which is, that in your transactions with CLEON you are to press the bringing these propositions to some maturity, with more or less eagerness, according to the advices you shall receive from ARTAPHERNES of his success at Sparta; for the king still persists in his intentions to declare in favour of that republic, as the less dangerous rival to Persia, if terms, in any degree advantageous, can be obtained. That Satrap will, in a few days, set forward on his embassy; he intends to cross the Hellespont at Abydus, and from thence pursue his journey through Thrace, Macedon, Thessaly, and Bœotia, into Peloponnesus. I have enclosed the letter from the king to the Lacedæmonians, of which he is the bearer; and from thence you may judge the tendency of his instructions. Whenever he informs you, that he finds no disposition in the Lacedæmonians to comply with his offers, the king gives you leave in that extremity, and not else, to inform CLEON of a design greatly prejudicial to the interests of Athens, which is now forming amongst the chief of the allies; no less a one, than to deprive them of their colonies in Thrace. We are very well assured, that measures are now concerting under-hand to march a body of forces into that country next spring, under the command of BRASIDAS. A private agent from Sparta is actually at the court of Macedon, endeavouring to detach PERDICCAS from his alliance with the Athenians, to which that prince is not very averse, as he perceives their garrisons in Thrace are at present in a weak condition. A party is likewise ready at Amphipolis to throw off the Athenian government, as soon as they

see an army in the field ready to support them in the attempt. The discovery of these important circumstances, accompanied in the king's name with an offer of assistance, whenever the Athenians are attacked in those quarters, must convince them (or nothing can) that it is in the king's power, as well by his intelligence, as his strength, to prove a very valuable ally to them, if they will but contribute towards fixing him in their interests.

As the king is very sensible, that whatever outward turn things take between him and the republic of Athens, it will be highly important to have a secret friend in their councils; he refers it entirely to your prudence to offer CLEON from him an annual gratification, in such a proportion, as shall make him entirely ours; and he will faithfully perform any terms you shall engage for.

I have now, CLEANDER, traced out the chief outlines of your conduct, both as it particularly relates to Athens, and as it is connected with ARTAPHERNES's negotiation at Sparta. Most of the finishing strokes must be left to your joint judgments in the scene of action. The king thinks he may securely trust the most essential interests of his crown and empire in the hands of two ministers, whose abilities, diligence, and fidelity he has so often experienced. Farewel.

P.

ARTAXERXES to the King, Senate, and People of the
LACEDÆMONIANS.

IT has been our constant endeavour, during the whole course of our reign, not only to adhere steadily to the alliances, in which we engage ourselves with foreign powers, but to strengthen those bands of amity by closer ties with those, who at any time express their good dispositions towards our person and empire. Much more do we think ourselves indispensably obliged to protect our weak allies from the encroachments of aspiring neighbours, and to make use of that power, wherewith OROMASDES hath blessed us, not wrongfully to seize and lay waste the dominions of other princes, but, as far as in us lies, to repress the injurious, and relieve the distressed. Upon these principles we have constantly afforded a hospitable reception to the different ministers you have sent to our court, and given a full and impartial hearing to the complaints, which they have in your name, and that of your allies, communicated to us of the usurpations and arbitrary proceedings of the Athenians, the necessity you thought yourselves under to declare war against them, and your desire, that we should assist you in restoring the balance of power in Greece, and securing the independency of every state. But we take this opportunity of remonstrating to you, that we have found these accounts so varying and different from the relations given of the same facts by the Athenians, that it has been impossible for us to determine, on which side the truth and equity of the cause lay; and we trust no consideration whatever shall engage us to draw the sword,

but on just and reasonable grounds. Your ambassadors besides have not agreed on the concessions they were at liberty to grant us, though the question concerned indisputable rights, derived to us from the foundation of our monarchy, which were by violence extorted from us, and which, by the blessing of OROMASDES, whilst we possess one foot of this extended empire, we are determined to preserve our claim to. For these and other motives we have, by the advice of our seven counsellors, dispatched to you the satrap ARTAPHERNES, one of that number, to receive any proposals and accounts you shall think fit to lay before us, to acquaint you in return with our intentions, and to bring back to us your determinate and final resolution. He has been employed in the weightiest matters of state by our royal father and ourselves; and both by his birth, capacity, and services, is entitled to the most honourable reception you can bestow. And we do assure you, that whatever marks of regard you shall express on his account, shall be considered as the strongest proofs you can give, of your respect towards us, and your affection to the general welfare of our empire.

The first of the moon Churdad.

P.

L E T T E R CLXI.

CRATIPPUS to CLEANDER.

THERE is no prejudice more frequent, CLEANDER, nor at the same time more unjust or ungenerous, than that we are apt to conceive against the characters of those, who have been active in opposition to us, either on national or personal accounts. The most consummate abilities and integrity, in such circumstances, are never secure from the most virulent reproach; and the partiality of mankind, as it often bestows reputation for ridiculous or absurd reasons, so it denies it for self-interested, or false ones. Thus precarious is the good opinion of the world; thus contemptible the passion for it!

I am led into these thoughts by what occurred to me the other day, as I was surveying the temple of MINERVA CHALCIÆCUS in this city. "Pray, said I to my companion, did not ARISTOMENES the Messenian dedicate a shield here to the Goddess, with an inscription signifying it was taken from the Spartan spoils?" It surprised me a good deal to find him backward in answering a question of mere heedless curiosity, which, I declare to thee, carried no other meaning in it, than the words imported. "I don't see any such ornament, con-

tinued I with my former inadvertence, among the offerings." "No, cried my grave friend, it would have been a disgrace to Sparta, and an injury to MINERVA, not to have destroyed the smallest memorial of that rebel's vanity." The epithet of rebel bestowed on one, whose family had been royal, while Messene was a kingdom, and the imputation of vanity on him, who was an unaffected lover of his country, and the humblest of all great men in his general deportment, made such an impression on me, that I could have been very eloquent in his defence, if the place and season would have permitted it, or the man had been capable of feeling it. At last I determined in my own mind, to appeal from the narrow and opinionated understanding of a Lacedæmonian, to the enlarged and penetrating judgment of CLEANDER. Perhaps you may think, that a spirit of extreme good nature, or surly contradiction, has drawn me into an unreasonable panegyric; and if you have heard but little of the history of this extraordinary genius, or unfavourably of it, you may imagine, that while other people unite in admiring THESEUS, CYRUS, LEONIDAS, or THEMISTOCLES, I would earnestly contended for an hero of my own chusing, for a portrait of my own painting. But I beseech you to despise these prejudices, at least to suspend them for a moment.

The Messenians are a people of the best natural sense and courage I have ever been acquainted with, and even in slavery give continual proofs of their capacity for enjoying liberty, as well as the justice of their claim to it. I have conversed with many of them, who are descended of a noble race, and are so harrassed by the Spartans, as to be constrained to the drudgery of Helots. Under all these oppressions they still retain a magnani-

mity, which may break out one day or other to the ruin of this state. They respect the memory of ARISTOMENES as much as their masters can detest it, and are careful to inform their youth in all the circumstances of his life and actions, that when a fair opportunity offers, they may be excited to an emulation of him. For this reason they celebrate his birth-day with joy, lamenting at the same time the unhappy issue of his endeavours. About forty years after the entire reduction of Messenia, (when the inhabitants were annually constrained to bring half the produce of their lands to Sparta, and to attend, without any distinction of age or sex, at the funeral of the Lacedæmonian kings and senators) in the 34th Olympiad, ARISTOMENES shone out to the honour of his country, and of human kind. With every good quality, that could engage the attention of his fellows and every improvement, that the strength and quickness of his parts, though little cultivated, could acquire, he raised a spirit in the people of Messenia, and, as soon as it was ripe for a revolt, communicated his designs to the Arcadians. They were old allies of the Messenians, had sent them aids in their former wars against the Spartans, and received the intimation with pleasure. ARISTOMENES lost no time; he put himself at the head of such troops as he could bring together, and with equal intrepidity and skill stood his ground against the enemy. His little army entitled him their king, but he forbade them to give him any name, except that of general. And though it is affirmed, that he shewed amazing instances of his military genius in the first battle near Deræ, yet he was so industrious in distinguishing the merit of inferior officers, and imputing the victory to them, that he at once removed all envy from himself, and

inspired his soldiers with new vigour. Immediately after this he came to Sparta by night, and gave his shield to MINERVA, praying for the prosperity of an injured people. The Lacedæmonians in the mean time consulted the oracle, doubtful of the event, on which both their honour and security depended. They were ordered to seek a general from Athens. The Athenians commissioned the blind poet and school-master TYRTAEUS to go to them, in contempt of this request, as well as in consummation of the oracle. They thought nobody could assist them less, at a season, when they never wanted a commander more. But the conjecture of that jealous republic was a mistaken one. It is said, the eulogies of TYRTAEUS roused the valor of the Spartans; and that they were not so much indebted to the experience and conduct of their officers, as to the fire and numbers of his poetry. For my own part, I have always looked upon this part of the story as fabulous; since the necessity of the times must operate more strongly on the minds of that brave and illiterate people, than the raptures of the finest verse; and because in fact it appeared, that TYRTAEUS neither retarded the progress, nor prevented the victories of ARISTOMENES. It would be endless to recite the difficulties this great man struggled through; the complete triumphs he gained; the several acts of personal valour he performed; the turn that fortune took at last in favour of the Spartans; the dispersion of many exiled Messenians into different parts of the world; the colonies they founded; and, after all, the tranquillity, with which he closed the evening of his days at Rhodes, in the palace of his son-in-law DEMAGETUS.

There are, however, two or three accidents of his life, which deserves a particular enlargement. During the

course of the war, he frequently made excursions into Laconia, with small bodies of men, and one day fell into an ambush, which might probably have put an end to his life, and been fatal to the liberties of his countrymen. He had no less than half the troops of LACEDÆMON to encounter, which he did with surprizing dexterity and presence of mind; but in the middle of the engagement he was stunned to the ground by a stone aimed at him from a sling, and fifty of his men were taken prisoners with him. The Spartans soon determined what to do with them; and accordingly they were all thrown into a deep cave, not as honourable enemies, but rebellious traitors. All his companions were killed in the fall: he alone escaped; the guardian Deity of Messene protected a life so important to the interests of it. He lay there three days on the dead heaps of his friends, covered round in his garments, and expected a lingering death with his usual magnanimity. On the third day he was waked out of a gentle sleep by a noise he heard, that caused him to rise and look about him. He saw a fox coming in through a small passage to prey upon the carcases. When it stood within his reach, he suddenly caught hold of its tail, and as it offered to bite him, put his cloak into its mouth. Then he suffered the creature to drag him through the narrow way, and after some time finding the light to come in, let it go, and got out of the dungeon, to the inconceivable joy of the Messenians. Thou seest this story is rather to the credit of his good fortune, than of his virtue; but the next is a memorable instance of the last.

Some virgins of Caryæ were employed in ceremonies of religious duty to DIANA. ARISTOMENES, with one of his foraging parties, took them, because he thought the

price of their ransom would be considerable, as they were of rich and noble families. In their way to Andania, where his residence was, they lay one night in a petty village. His comrades, heated with wine and lust, offered great rudenesses to them, and attempted to violate their chastity. The confusion this occasioned alarmed him, and he went immediately amongst them; but perceiving that neither his arguments nor authority had any weight, he drew his sword, stabbed the most furious with his own hand, marked the rest with infamy, and asserted the honour of the women; so great was the severity of his manners, and such were his exalted notions of continence. Nor was the lenity of ARISTOMENES inferior to his justice. After the enemy had taken Ira, and were plundering it, (which was a fatal blow to the Messenians,) this unwearied general chose five hundred men out of his army, and determined to attack Sparta itself in the night. He proposed it to the Arcadians and their king. Three hundred offered themselves on the spot, and the scheme was agreed to. But the execution of it was deferred till the next day, because the auspices were not favourable. By that time the king had betrayed it to ANAXIMANDER the Spartan; and while his answer was returning, some persons, who suspected the import of the packet, seized in the very hands of the messenger, and laid it before an assembly of the people. The Arcadians on a short deliberation resolved to stone the prince, and after executing the sentence with their own hands, treated the body in the most ignominious manner. As they were proceeding to this extremity, they intreated the Messenians to assist them. The looks of the whole croud were fixed on ARISTOMENES in eager expectation of his commands. He said

nothing, turned his eyes on the ground, and burst into tears.

Dost thou think, CLEANDER, if an historian had recorded the actions of this man, a poet sung his praises, or the theatre of his glory proved nobler and more extended, that such virtues had ever been confined to the knowledge and admiration of the Messenians, or the envy and detraction of the Spartans? Would not his name have been continually ranked in all nations among the first heroes of antiquity, and his character placed in competition, unfortunate as he was, with the successful deliverers of mankind?

C.

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C.

L E T T E R CLXII.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

THOU mayst remember, venerable Mage, that in the account, which I gave * thee of a conversation I had with SOCRATES on the banks of the river Ilissus, I expressed some regret, that I could not then engage him in deeper discussion of one principle, which he asserted with an air of the fullest persuasion, that of the immortality of the soul. I need not tell thee, with what impatience I waited for an opportunity to learn his intire sentiments upon a subject of such importance. This satisfaction I obtained yesterday, upon a very solemn occasion; and his discourse has filled my mind with so agreeable a prospect of futurity, that it would be ungenerous to confine within my own breast the light he has diffused over a doctrine, which it is so highly the interest of every good man, as well as so worthy the attributes of the great OROMASDES, to be true.

† AXIOCHUS, a friend of mine, considerable for his rank in this city, but still more so for his integrity and

* See Letter LII.

‡ See the third dialogue of *ÆSCHINES*, the Socratic philosopher, published by Monsieur LE CLERC, 1711, in 8vo. *PHRYNICUS*, cited by *PHOTIUS* in his *Bibliotheca*, Cod. CLVIII. tells us, that these dialogues, and others, which are lost, were ascribed by some to *SOCRATES* himself. However it is allowed, that *ÆSCHINES* was a faithful reporter of that

amiable qualities, being seized with a very dangerous distemper, I went to pay him a visit; and, to my great surprize, found his mind as disordered as his body, from the apprehensions of instant death, which, under the confusion of thought, occasioned by the severity of his disease, appeared to him nothing less than the absolute extinction of his being. In this view, even the consciousness of a long course of years, spent in the practice of the most diffusive benevolence, could give him no adequate consolation; and the dread of sinking into nothing, to which human nature has a natural and unconquerable reluctance, rendered this last scene of the good man's life very unsuitable to the serenity and beauty of all the former.

CLINIAS his son, moved with his distress, requested SOCRATES to visit his father, and to shew the advantage of true philosophy in a circumstance, which, of all others, most requires the solid supports of reason. SOCRATES entered soon after I came to AXIOCHUS, and began to dispel his fears of death, as of the final period of our existence, with an uncommon force of argument, and energy of expression. "The powers and perfections of the human soul, said he, are an invincible demonstration of its divine and immortal nature. For it could not have raised itself on such an exalted height in executing the greatest affairs, so as to despise the strength even of brute creatures, though far superior to our own, to pass over seas, build cities, found commonwealths, contemplate the heavens, view the revolutions of the stars, the courses of the sun and

philosopher's doctrine; whereas PLATO, on the other hand, indulged his own fancy, and published many things under SOCRATES's name, which, it is certain, he never said. Vide ARISTID. Oration. Platon. 367. Edit. Cantei.

moon, their risings and settings, their eclipses and immediate restoration to their former state, the equinoxes and solstices, the significations of the pleiades concerning winter and summer, the winds and descents of showers, and the unseasonable storms and whirlwinds; and to foretell for ever, by certain rules, what shall happen in the natural world: these things, I say, the soul could never do, unless it were really possessed of a divine spirit, by which it can extend its knowledge to so amazing a degree, and comprehend within its view the whole compass of nature. It is impossible therefore, that such a being, allied to, and resembling the Deity itself, should cease to exist, by any change made in the body, or even the total dissolution of it. No, AXIOCHUS, you will not sink into the abyss of oblivion and non-existence, but be raised to a state of immortality; nor will any of your rational delights be taken from you, but you will enjoy them more perfectly. Your pleasures will have no tincture of this mortal body, but always continue pure and unallayed. When you are disengaged from this prison, you will be translated to a world, where there is neither labour, nor sorrow, nor the infirmities and decays of age. You will enjoy there a state of tranquillity and freedom from all evil; and be enabled to contemplate nature, and study philosophy, not for the sake of the multitude and the public, but out of regard to truth alone, and the satisfaction resulting from the pursuit of it."

AXIOCHUS, struck with the charms of this discourse, cried out; "You have drawn me over, SOCRATES, to your opinion. I am now disengaged from my former weakness, and become a new man. I am no longer fearful of death, but ambitious of it, and impatient for it." "I congratulate you, replied SOCRATES, upon your conviction

of this noble principle ; a principle of the highest advantage to us through all the circumstances of life, but most eminently so in the situation you are in. And now, if you have the curiosity to hear a more particular description of the other state, I will give it you, as it was represented to me by GOBRYAS the mage. He told me, that at the time of XERXES's expedition into Europe, his grandfather, who was of the same name with himself, being sent to Delos, in order to secure that island, learned there from certain books of brass, brought by OPIS and ECAERGUS from the Hyperboreans, that the soul, after it is freed from the body goes into an invisible place beneath the earth, the realm of PLUTO. The Porch of Life, which leads to the palace of the monarch, is fortified with iron bolts and bars, beyond which lie the rivers Acheron and Cocytus ; and beyond them the Plain of Truth, where sit the judges MINOS and RHADAMANTHUS. These examine every one, who comes, what manner of life he has led in this mortal state ; and it is impossible for him to return a false answer. Whoever therefore has followed the impulses of his good genius in this life, is placed in the seats of the good and pious. Here the air is always tempered with the gentle beams of their own sun ; the seasons produce all their stores with unbounded profusion. Here the fountains flow with the most limpid streams, the meadows smile with all the variety of beautiful flowers. Here are schools of philosophers, theatres of poets, and the most elegant concerts of music and dancing. In short, here are all the blissful scenes of immortal happiness, and undisturbed ease and tranquillity. But on the other hand, whoever has led a vicious life, is hurried away by the furies through Tartarus into Erebus and Chaos. There is the seat of the impious, the pitchers of DANAUS's daughters, which are never filled, the everlasting thirst of TANTALUS, TITYUS with his bowels ever consuming,

and SISYPHUS rolling up the stone with endless and unavailing labour. In a word, here the wicked are tortured with all the forms of punishment to all eternity. This is the account, which I heard from GOBRYAS: you, AXIOCHUS, may pass what judgment you please upon it. For I only know this from the unerring principles of reason, that the soul is immortal; and that the good habits, which it has contracted in this world, will prove the source of the most refined happiness to it in the future. Rest therefore assured, my friend, that whether you are placed above or below, you must be happy, since you have lived virtuously." "How, SOCRATES, shall I express my gratitude, rejoined AXIOCHUS? Thou hast more than restored me to life; thou hast raised me to immortality. I shall now wait with pleasure that crisis, which you have taught me to consider as the birth of a new and nobler state of existence."

Venerable SMERDIS, I returned home full of adoration of the supreme wisdom and goodness of OROMASDES; who has endowed human nature with powers and faculties, capable of perpetual improvement through an infinite duration, while every new object, in the boundless system of the universe, will prove to it an inexhaustible fund of the most exquisite satisfaction. Since therefore the instincts, the desires, and the expectations, interwoven in our very frame, and the dictates of the most cultivated reason, shew me, that I am necessarily to exist to eternity; and since I feel, that the happiness of every intelligent being in every point of its existence depends upon the rectitude of its disposition; I am resolved, from this moment, to govern myself in a manner suitable to the importance of these motives. By this means I shall enjoy all the present advantages of a right conduct; and soften the uneasy circumstances, to which my peculiar situation, as well as the general condition of mankind expose me, with this assurance, that

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virtue stands upon an everlasting basis, secure in its own nature, as well as from the immediate protection of the all-powerful OROMASDES. Farewell.

B.

L E T T E R CLXIII.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

MY brother HIPPIAS has transmitted to me from Ephesus thy letter containing the king's instructions, in return to the dispatches, which I sent by CHARICLES. No one, potent lord, can entertain a stronger sense of gratitude than myself for that gracious acceptance, with which my royal master hath ever deigned to honour the services of his faithful slave. Permit me to say, that if the execution of my orders can claim any merit, it is owing to the fortunate conjuncture of affairs, which inspires, and the masterly pen of GOBRYAS, which enforces them with such strength and clearness, not to the genius or address of CLEANDER. Lay me, I beseech thee, at the footstool of ARTAXERXES, and represent, in more respectful terms than I am able to invent, what I feel for this last and most durable instance of his princely liberality, which is as much beyond my merit, as beyond my desires. The assurances thou hast been pleased to give me of the entire secrecy, with which this whole transaction relating to CLEON has been managed, sets me free from many apprehensions I had, perhaps too hastily, given way to, of its

being discovered by the penetrating eyes of the agents, whom this state employs in all quarters. But I must own, the passionate capricious humour of CLEON still keeps me in perpetual alarms, lest, if the Persian ministry should not answer his expectations in their public conduct, or feed his avarice with sufficient supplies, he may turn the edge of his resentment against the person, who engaged him in measures, which he will then fancy inconvenient, and cut him off by a more summary way than a judicial proceeding. I can however assure thee, that it is not so much any danger to myself, which occasions the uneasiness of my present situation, as the footing I am upon with regard to my former friends, many of whom being in the faction opposite to CLEON; and having formerly protected me from his malicious attempts, behave towards me with great coolness and reserve, since the discovery they pretend to have made, that I am become one of his most intimate confidants. They charge me with nothing less than ingratitude, fickleness, and throwing off my old principles; and impute to base and mercenary views the part, which my duty to the king obliges me to act.

PHILEMON has not for some time unboomed himself to me with that amiable freedom, which he used; and upon my entering the other day into an expostulation with him upon this subject, he replied, that he was not apt to conceive suspicions lightly against any, who had once fixed themselves in his good opinion; but there were some things in my late behaviour, which appeared to him wholly unaccountable; and though he would not ascribe them to the motives, which some ventured to assign, he must tell me plainly, whilst these reasons subsisted, he could not converse with me on the same terms as formerly. I endeavoured to justify myself in regard to my late familiarity with CLEON, which I knew PHILEMON alluded to,

by saying, that he had first made overtures of friendship, and performed several good-natured offices, in the way of trade, towards my brother and his family at Ephesus. But the sequel of our discourse shewed, that expostulations do not succeed so well amongst friends as lovers, and I left him with much concern. It has been told me, that several of the most zealous of his party were very earnest with him to enter a declaration in the Archons court, that he no longer looked upon himself as my patron; but the humane old man rejected that motion with warmth.

Imagine not, potent Lord, that I have said thus much with the most distant view of declining to obey the king's orders about my farther residence in this city. I know my duty too well, to dispute his commands one moment; and if he thinks so insignificant an agent, as myself, in any degree conducive to his service, I lay my head in the dust before him, and submit without reluctance. But amidst these perplexities, thy protection, generous minister, is my surest support. 'Tis on that alone I do and must depend, to release me from an employment, wherein I labour under peculiar disadvantages.

But it is fit this personal detail should no longer interrupt the thread of public transactions, which I hasten to lay before thee.

The idle prefages of the adverse party are now mentioned with great contempt, who from two eclipses, which happened just before CLEON's embarkation, ventured to foretel, that the armies of the republic would never be successful, whilst so worthless and dangerous a citizen was invested with the chief command of them. That favourite superstition of turning the regular operations of

nature into omens of approaching calamities, has gradually lost ground for some years at Athens; and having been exploded in the schools of philosophers, will soon become an object of ridicule with the multitude, however tenacious they are apt to be of the prejudices of childhood. When this ill-boding spirit lately displayed itself, I told CLEON, that if he found it made the same impression upon his forces, which it did formerly upon those of PERICLES, he might once in his life be obliged to the example of his predecessor for a remedy to the evil. An eclipse of the sun unfortunately fell out, as that great general was preparing to sail on an important expedition: the whole fleet was seized with a pious consternation; every body cried out, that the Gods were displeased with the management of affairs, and fatal might be the consequences of joining battle with their enemies, before they had appeased the offended Deities. PERICLES observing, that his own pilot shewed more concern than the rest, sent for him upon deck, and before he was aware blind-folded him with his garment, in the presence of the crew; and then asked the fellow, whether he thought that short deprivation of sight the token of any mischief to himself. The pilot bluntly answered, No. "Why then, replied PERICLES, do you imagine, that the interposition of one celestial body before another foretels any misfortune to your country?" This familiar illustration was adapted to the capacity of the hearers, and, I well remember, produced a marvellous good effect.

When CLEON returned from Sphacteria, he entered the harbour to the sound of flutes and other musical instruments; his ships being adorned with trophies, the statues of the Gods at the sterns crowned with garlands, and the soldiers on board drawn up in order of battle. In dropping anchor at the mole of the Piræus, he made a libation to

NEPTUNE in the sight of the whole city, who came on to meet him. At his landing, the multitude saluted him with repeated shouts, whilst accompanied by DEMOSTHENES, and the other principal officers, he passed along through two rows of soldiers to the Prytaneum. During the procession, the fairest hands in Athens were employed in pouring the most fragrant essence on his hair, and strewing the way before him with flowers. The prisoners followed in chains two and two. The magistrates received him at the Prytaneum, where they offered up a hecatomb to MARS; and the whole ceremonial was concluded by a sumptuous entertainment at the charge of the public, which lasted till late in the night.

The next morning CLEON harangued the assembly in very pompous terms on their success, which he extolled beyond the victories of Marathon and Platea, "since in this, he said, they had fought against the bravest of the Greeks, and depended entirely on their own natural strength; whereas in the former actions they contended with pusillanimous and undisciplined troops, and shared the glory in common with the rest of their allies." He then proposed the fate of the Spartan captives to their determination. After some debates it was decreed, "that they should remain prisoners, till the peace was concluded, and be maintained at the cost of the state; but in case the Peloponnesians made another irruption into Attica, they should be put to death."

The answer of MENAS, one of these captives, is much talked of, who being asked insultingly by an Athenian officer, whether their companions, who fell in the field of battle, were not the bravest among them? answered with a Laconic phlegm, "that an arrow would be a very va-

luable thing, if it could distinguish a gallant man from a coward ;” intimating not only, that there was no difference between those who were killed, and those who surrendered ; but that the Athenians had never ventured to attack them sword in hand.

Thou, who art minister to a prince, who can, without depopulating his provinces, spend the lives of thousands of his subjects, in support of his own dignity, and the honour of his empire, must be surprized to hear, what effect the loss of three hundred citizens has had at Sparta. Notwithstanding the haughty manner, in which their last proposals were received, a herald arrived here lately from thence with a letter to the Athenians, earnestly desiring a peace, and offering some more towns to obtain one ; but a large majority in the assembly carried it for answering, that they would not hearken to an accommodation, unless they might keep Pylus ; a condition, to which nothing but the extremest necessity can ever reduce the republic of Lacedæmon.

The credit and power of CLEON receives new lustre from the ineffectual expedition of NICIAS to Corinth. That general landed in a bay within a few leagues of the city, near which he had an obstinate encounter with a large body of Corinthian forces ; and though he claims the honour of the day, (the enemy being obliged to retire, and BATUS a general officer killed) yet he thought it more adviseable to reembark his men the following night ; and having made some incursions near Epidaurus, and built a fort on the Isthmus, is returned hither with his squadron. If thou desirest further particulars, they are contained in the enclosed paper, which comes from a good hand.

Our friend is so elevated by his own good fortune, and his rival's disappointment, that he thinks he may be indulged in any thing. The following instance is a strong specimen of his humour, as well as of this people's temper. The other day the assembly being convened on some business of consequence, waited for his coming two or three hours before they begun. At last he enters the forum with a chaplet on his head, and told them, that he had set apart that morning to offer a domestic sacrifice, and had invited some particular friends to an entertainment afterwards; and therefore hoped they would put off the business. The assembly, who are much delighted by these flights, burst out into a loud laugh, and adjourned to another time.

The affair of the marine treaty is brought to a happy conclusion. When it first arrived, there was great art and industry employed by the trierarchs and their friends to excite a general clamour against the article, which regulates the visiting our merchant ships; and CLEON himself seemed disposed to insist upon the taking off the restraint of two leagues. I discussed that point with him very thoroughly, and proved beyond contradiction, that the true source of all the objections to the treaty arose from the stop, which it would put to the rapine and extortion of their sea-officers, whose private gains ought not to be brought into competition with the general interest and security of the trade of both nations. My reasons were so successful, that he promised me to use his best endeavours, that all the articles without exception should be confirmed; only he pressed, that another might be added, for the better discovering and punishing the authors of counterfeit bills of lading and passes. I thought the motion quite reasonable, and assisted in framing an article to that pur-

pose, which I hope will meet with my royal master's approbation.

CLEON has kept his word, and really taken very laudable pains to remove the prejudices, that were raised against some clauses of the treaty; which, however, upon the whole, gives great satisfaction to the merchants here*.

The assembly have confirmed it by a decree, which is sent to their agent at the Persian court, who is instructed to receive the king's oath for the observance of the conditions, and require, that the Athenian merchants should be immediately put in possession of the privileges, which they are to enjoy by virtue of the treaty. I must do PYTHON the justice to say, that on this occasion he has acted the part of a minister, who thought it his duty to preserve a good understanding, and keep matters even between both states; and submit it to your better judgment, potent-Lord, whether for his future encouragement you should not take notice of his candid and impartial dealing in an affair, which a malicious and ill designing instrument might have entangled with many difficulties.

* It is much to be lamented, that this treaty of commerce, which would have given us farther light into the trade and navigation of those potent states, Athens and Persia, is only alluded to in the correspondence, and not preserved entire. I do not find, that Mr. BARBEYRAC, in his accurate Collection of Ancient Treaties, has given us the least hint of it; but if that learned professor should publish another edition of his valuable performance, I dare say he will enrich it with the particulars recited in the dispatches of CLEANDER and GOBRYAS, from whence many curious inferences may be drawn. Note by the Translator.

I have conferred with CLEON upon the other points of my instructions, and find him very desirous to be instrumental in strengthening this state by a closer alliance with Persia. He told me, as soon as I started the point, that the people would never repeal the two articles of CIMON's treaty by express words; but if we could agree on some expedient to answer the same end more indirectly, he would use his best endeavours to make it pass, though he doubted even that would meet with a warm opposition. I answered, it would be difficult to strike out a medium upon a point, wherein both parties thought their reputation and interest so nearly concerned; and that it behoved the Athenians to consider, whether they would not gain so considerable an ally as the king at an easy rate, by giving up to him, with a good grace, what he had, at the present juncture, in his power to seize, without asking their consent. Nor to tire thee with a needless detail, after turning the subject over in our thoughts, we conceived, that an article to the following purpose might answer the king's intention, and not shock the delicacy of the assembly. "By the present treaty all ancient jurisdictions, rights, and privileges of both the contracting parties shall be confirmed and secured." But I added, "that as my instructions directed me to insist upon an express annulling of those dishonourable clauses in CIMON's peace, I did not think myself at liberty to accept this expedient, as an adequate satisfaction to the king, or to give any hopes of its being agreed to in Persia: I could only transmit it to the ministers, and expect their farther orders on the point."

There likewise passed some conversation between us on the succours, which the republic would require the king to furnish, besides a fleet of an hundred galleys. He

insists, that an army be formed on the Hellespont to cover their dominions in Thrace, though I could not discover, that he was under any immediate apprehension of their being attacked.

He told me at parting, that he intended to communicate the substance of this conference to some of his friends, who had greatest weight amongst the people; and when it had been more minutely and thoroughly considered, would give me another meeting. Thou mayst be assured, I shall press this matter no farther, till I hear the result of ARTAPHERNES's negotiation at Sparta. There will be always matter enough in reserve to break off upon, whenever it shall be judged expedient. CLEON professed to me several times with great warmth, that he should think it the greatest honour and happiness of his life to deserve the good opinion of so generous and great a prince as ARTAXERXES, and to cure that aversion, which his countrymen had contracted to the very name of a Persian. At the same time he hoped, from the king's justice and humanity, that if ever the malice of his enemies prevailed, which in a commonwealth so given to change was putting no improbable case, he might find a safe retreat in his dominions. I hope I did not exceed my instructions by assuring him, that whenever such a reverse of fortune (which would be a fatal stroke on both states) did befall him, he might depend on a reception proportionate to his merit, and to the services which he had it in his power to perform.

Since thou art pleased to rely upon my opinion as to the annual gratifications, which he will expect from our court, I am confident the sum of fifty Attic talents of gold, regularly paid, will fix him entirely in our interest; and it is much to be desired, that his vanity may be so far

indulged, as to receive now and then from the king a letter in approbation of his conduct, a jewel, or some such personal mark of favour.

But let me also forewarn thee potent lord, that though a love of money is a predominant passion with our friend, whose continual expences are much larger than his annual income, or the profits of the public employments, which are conferred upon him, can support; a strong and unbridled resentment is a no less distinguishing part of his character. And I think him very capable, out of mere vexation at being duped, when he thinks himself most secure of our alliance, to take a turn equally violent and opposite; and to strike up a sudden peace with Sparta, that he may afterwards have his revenge upon Persia. For as he finds it his interest to keep Athens engaged in a war, he will not much concern himself, whether the objects of it be Greeks or Barbarians; and a rupture with the latter is a cause more universally approved.

I question not the vigilance and industry of ARTAPHERNES and CRATIPPUS to keep the Spartans steady to their engagements, and prevent any exclusive accommodation with Athens from taking effect. But thou must be sensible, that though a great deal of pains is requisite to preserve things in an natural course, (as, to speak truth a league between one of the most powerful Grecian states and our empire may justly be called) the slightest event, the most unforeseen revolution of affairs, is sufficient to bring them back to their natural channel. Upon a careful perusal of thy last dispatch, I find no instructions in what manner I shall behave towards CLEON, in case an alliance is concluded with Sparta; and yet it will be very necessary to inform me with the utmost speed,

in what terms I shall palliate or explain such a matter to him, which he will infallibly look upon as a breach of those assurances and hopes thou hast warranted me to give him.

I doubt not, noble scribe, that besides the proper methods of carrying on a war, in conjunction with either of the republics, which shall purchase our friendship by the most advantageous terms, thou must have considered of some scheme for a general pacification in this country, whenever affairs shall take that turn. And as it must, in all probability, be concluded under the king's arbitration, give me leave to recommend it to him, to insist upon it as an essential condition, that all the Grecian states should be left to the enjoyment of their own laws and liberties *. I know there is nothing, which the two principal commonwealths dread so much, as to be deprived of that authority they now exercise over the lesser states, which is indeed necessary for the union and common safety of the country. At the same time nothing will carry a more popular sound with it, than to establish an universal independency over Greece, nor have more the appearance of equity, than that every city from the greatest to the least should enjoy an equal portion of liberty.

* The peace of Antalcidas concluded about thirty years after, under the arbitration of ARTAXERXES MNEMON, was formed upon the plan recommended in this letter by CLEANDER. Those, who are acquainted with the Roman story, must recollect, that Q. FLAMINIUS, after driving the Macedonians out of Greece, pursued the same policy, which by giving the senate a pretext to interpose in every difference, how immaterial soever, that arose among so many independent disunited states, soon brought them all under the Roman yoke. These two examples, I must confess, heighten my opinion of our Ephesian's judgment and sagacity. Note by the Translator.

Thou art too sagacious, experienced minister, not to perceive, that this is the surest method of weakening the general strength of Greece, and sowing the seeds of perpetual division amongst its inhabitants; for the weakest must, upon every occasion, call in the assistance of Persia, and appeal with eagerness to the mediation of its prince, who, without the least expence of blood or treasure, will have the satisfaction of dictating laws to those, who refused to receive them from the most powerful of his predecessors, and reign in grandeur and tranquillity secure from the danger of any confederated invasion of their territories. Farewell.

From Athens the 19th of the month Boedromion.

P.

L E T T E R CLXIV.

CRATIPPUS TO CLEANDER. From Sparta.

THE resolution taken by the supreme council to send one of their own number to this city does great honour to those representations, I have lately ventured to lay before them. I saw very clearly, that NICANDER, who in truth had alone the secret of the embassy, was not to be treated with. The ridiculous prejudice about Greeks and Barbarians entirely takes up his little mind; besides that he is attached to a powerful faction here, who would redeem the prisoners of Sphaëria at the price of almost any peace. My friend BRASIDAS has put himself at the head of the opposite party: the military glory, which he acquired in the late campaigns, is much heightened by a character of justice and humanity, which all agree to give him, and which has induced several of the Athenian allies to open their gates to him, and become the friends of this state. Thus qualified, he has projected a noble revenge for the affront at Pylos, and hopes his attempt upon the enemy's rich settlements in Thrace will more than compensate the loss of an handful of Spartan citizens. In this design the assistance of Persia will be of singular use; and if ARTAPHENES may undertake for a body of troops to be ready on the other side the Hellespont, it will smooth the way to whatever demands he is to make. But it is

not only from this particular circumstance of affairs, that I conceive great hopes of his embassy. A satrap of his rank has never been seen in Greece, except at the head of a vast army, laying waste her provinces, and enslaving the inhabitants: and it will flatter the vanity of this haughty republic, that the first of that quality, who passes into Europe with offers of peace, is addressed hither. By his nearness to the king's person he will speak in his name with great authority; and the concessions he shall make in the course of the negotiation, will be attended to, as not to be disowned or evaded. As I promise myself so much from ARTAPHERNES, I am the more impatient for his arrival, and not without some apprehension, that his journey through Thrace may be inconvenient, if not dangerous. At this season the Athenian commissioners are travelling about that country to collect the tribute; and, I doubt, whether the law of nations will prevail upon them to let such an army of strangers, as attend upon the satrap, pass through their territory toward the enemy. It would have been more advisable to take the rout, I mentioned in my first project, from some port of Caria directly cross the Ægean to the Bay of Laconia.

The first notice the public had of any expedition being intended, was a proclamation addressed to the Helots, inviting all such, as had served in the wars with reputation, to appear before the Ephori, in order to their receiving the reward of their bravery, and being again enlisted. Great numbers presented themselves; and the magistrates chose out two thousand of the most vigorous and alert, whom they immediately crowned with garlands, and led in procession round the temples by these ceremonies declaring them freemen of Sparta. I was upon the plain at the foot of Taygetus the day they were

drawn out; and struck with the warlike appearance of these enfranchised slaves, I could not but congratulate the Polemarchs, who stood near me, that their city was able to raise thus on a sudden such a formidable body of men from a part of the people, which was condemned to the meaner offices of life, and looked on as nothing less than a seminary for soldiers. The officers received my compliment in a more cold and dry manner, than I, though so long used to their turn of conversation, could expect; but a little time convinced me, that I had touched upon a disagreeable point. These troops were not to be employed in foreign service; nor was their admission to the rank of citizens intended as an increase of strength at home. They soon began to disappear by degrees, and some days after not one of them was to be seen or heard of any more. All this passed without one remark made upon it; it was a subject studiously avoided in every conversation. My curiosity was therefore but the more excited; and at last I got certain intelligence, that these deluded wretches had quarters assigned them in the houses of the principal citizens, with the intention, that each man might have an opportunity of dispatching his guest in the most private manner. Thus perished, without an enemy, in the midst of their own city, a greater number of men, than has been known to fall in a battle amongst the Greeks. What a sacrifice to the prejudices and false maxims of Spartan policy! Absurd and detestable policy! which looks upon the increase of inhabitants to be dangerous to the state, and treats those, who supply the first necessities of life, the tillers of the ground, as public enemies. A plague or an inundation would be proper instruments of such a government; and might have spared the ruling members the extensive act of barbarity, which has now been thought expedient. The established methods of dealing with the Helots are such, as

tend to make them foes to their masters, and to introduce a necessity of keeping down their numbers, and their spirits. But this is usually brought about by slow degrees; the present exigency of affairs was judged to call for something more sudden and decisive. Pylos, a fortress so near this city, seized by the Athenians, has by them been delivered over to the Messenians, always either slaves to Sparta, or her deadliest enemies, who call the Helots countrymen, and loudly invite them to shake off their chains. Such an occasion of liberty and revenge the Ephori supposed would not be neglected; they foresaw continual desertion: they feared a general revolt, and knew not how to prevent it, but by a massacre of the most active and daring.

I protest, CLEANDER, this cruelty shocks my nature; I am sick of the narrow principles, whereby this state is conducted; I am ashamed of my relation, as a Greek, to this selfish little people. Happy are we, my friend, to be adopted into a better country, where, safe in the protection of one common lord, the inhabitants of distant climates are equally encouraged to serve the public; where the registers of honour are open without distinction to Lydians and Medes, to Bactrians and Ionians; where those, who cover the fields with grain, and the mountains with plantations, are esteemed and rewarded; where domestic affection extends even to slaves, and a captive Greek often shares the friendship of his lord. Full of such ideas, how can I look upon these butchers of their servants, their husbandmen, their useful fellow-citizens, their valiant fellow-soldiers? Yet such is the force of custom even in noble minds! Soon after the execution, I waited upon BRASIDAS, who shewed no marks of concern or remorse, though forty of the unhappy men were committed to his care, and perished under his inhospitable roof. Adieu.

W.

L E T T E R CLXV.

CLEANDER to HYDASPES.

I was at a Symposium * an evening or two ago, where SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES, ARISTOPHANES, and several other philosophers and wits were present. When we parted, the comic poet (with whom I have been acquainted ever since the affair of the farcaftical † iambics) was in such good humour, that he invited me to his house the next day; and promised to indulge me in the reading of a new comedy, which is to be presented to the judges at the approaching festival. Thou mayest imagine, HYDASPES, I readily complied with him, partly because I was curious to know what he had upon the anvil; and partly because I hoped to be better informed on some points relating to the Greek theatre, by one, who has so great a share in supporting its reputation. And in truth I had much entertainment from my visit.

* It is probable from the beginning of this letter, that the Symposium of Plato (the subject of which is love) took its rise from a real conversation. The interlocutors mentioned here are exactly the same with those introduced there. ARISTOPHANES makes a very odd figure in it; and though the philosopher has taken no notice of CLEANDER, yet he was certainly of the party. The intelligent reader must be pleased with tracing out the minutiae of antiquity, when they concern such Symposia as those, which Plato has recorded.

† See Letter XCI.

As soon as I entered, he received me with his usual vivacity, and said, "Let us lose no time in compliments, but proceed to business." Accordingly, he at once unlocked his cabinet, and drew out many rough unfinished sketches of plays. He asked my judgment of some of them, and then sat down to read the performance, which I expected with impatience. The title was drawn from the second order of men in the state, who are called ἑταῖραι, and compose the chorus. The turn of it was a virulent satire upon CLEON and the people. The first persons, who appear, are DEMOSTHENES and NICIAS in the habit of slaves. They complain of a steward, who has got into the house, cajoles the good old master of it, and pretends to act the tyrant. As a specimen of what it contains I will copy one speech from it, which is in the mouth of DEMOSTHENES. "Our master, says he, is old, deaf, choleric, capricious, and an huge lover of beans.* It is not long since he took it into his head to buy a Paphlagonian† into his family, who had been formerly a currier, a fellow of intrigue, and a noted informer. This currier finds means to work himself into his good graces, by low craft and insinuation. "Good people of Athens, says he, you have taken a great deal of pains to-day. Eat, drink, and be easy. Be pleased to receive your oboli. Will you permit me to entertain you with a banquet?" And the rascal triumphs in this impertinence. He has won upon his silly master, and deprives the rest of the slaves of whatever is their due. It was my good fortune to do well at Pylus, but he has taken from me the credit of the action. That

* Alluding to the way of voting in use among the Athenians.

† CLEON is called a Paphlagonian, not because he was of that country, but (as the commentators say) because it furnished ARISTOPHANES with a conceit to express his rough and passionate character, the Greek word [παφλαγῶν, *ferreo*] conveying that idea.

plaguy leather thong, which he carries about with him, keeps us at distance; he amuses the old fool with oracles; tells lies of us, for which we are beaten; then runs about the house, and terrifies the servants: "Don't you see *HYLAS*? he cries. I got that dog whipped. By *JUPITER*, if you don't buy me off, you shall be served in the same manner." If we bribe him, it is safe with us. If not, our master falls a kicking and cuffing, and we suffer for our honesty."

The whole play is written in this style, and is a strange mixture of wit and nonsense, of fact and allegory; for it is a common thing with *ARISTOPHANES* to go out of his allegory, and talk openly of what he means by it. As soon as these complaints are over, they consider of methods to redress them. At last they take a resolution to set up one *AGORACRITUS*, a fellow of mean extraction and employment, in opposition to *CLEON*. They meet him as he is going to market, and salute him with a farcical respect: "Be thou the saviour of the city, and of us." The man does not understand them, but they make him a politician against his will. He tells them, that he can scarce read, and has not one qualification for a statesman. They answer, it is no matter for that; he has a great deal of impudence, and a noisy tongue, which are the proper talents. They exhort him not to be afraid of *CLEON*, for he will not appear himself; since no artist in Athens would dare to form a mask after his likeness. He is promised the assistance of the chorus, of the spectators, and of the Gods. *CLEON* comes in, and after much ridiculous dispute between them before *NICIAS* in this act, and before the old man through the rest, where they forge oracles one against another, and contend, which shall make the best dinners for him, *CLEON* owns himself defeated, and retires. The scene, to prepare the audience for this event, is a parody of that noble one in

the OEDIPUS of Sophocles, where the king examines LAIUS's shepherd concerning his birth. AGORACRITUS, (by whom, it seems, HYPERBOLUS, a man rising in favour with the people, is designed), produces an oracle, in which the qualities of CLEON's successor are delineated. CLEON discerns, by degrees, that his antagonist is the man, and at last sinks into despair. The comedy concludes with joy on the part of AGORACRITUS; he releases two women, whom CLEON had imprisoned, and whom he calls the ancient alliances between Athens and Lacedæmon.

"I hope, said I, ARISTOPHANES, that nobody has overheard us; for though you are not afraid to write, or even to publish these pieces, yet I am afraid to be privy to them. You may remember, how I suffered two years ago for being thought to have a share in the iambics. I know you are at open war with CLEON; but it is above my genius to encounter with ministers of state. I do assure you, that I never heard any thing, which gave me so much pleasure for the smartness, and so much pain for the boldness of it." The poet laughed; "CLEANDER, replied he, if you were an Athenian, and talked to me in this way, I might be tempted to expose your weakness in one of my comedies, and the chorus should point at you in the pit. But as you are an Ephesian, I forgive the prejudices, in which you were educated to reverence or fear bad governors." "Nay, returned I, there are persons in the city of the same sentiments with me. Have not you said, somewhere in this very play, that you could procure no vizor to resemble CLEON?" "Yes, said he, and I can tell you further, that my two best actors have refused the part; so I shall perform it myself." "The character, replied I, which should give most offence, is that of the old fellow, whom you have represented to be the tool of the ignorant and

designing. CLEON is but one; and the old man is a multitude." "It is for that reason, said ARISTOPHANES, every body will pretend to be pleased with it. No individual imagines he is aimed at in a satire on the collective body. Each owns its justness, when applied to his neighbour, and thinks, in not seeming to be touched with it, he actually removes the point of it from himself. But CLEON being particularly ridiculed, and of a proud impatient nature, he will endeavour to gain some revenge. It makes me happy, that I can mortify his vanity in the height of his power."

"We have laughed a great deal, interrupted I, ARISTOPHANES; you shall now permit me to change the scene from mirth to sober inquiry, and from humour to philosophy. When I reflect on the origin of dramatic writing, I often wonder at the different progress of tragedy and comedy. The first has filed off its roughnesses both of diction and sentiment, and is polished into a just representation of human action. The last is not an artful exhibition of the real nature of men, but an uncouth aggravation of its deformities, and retains much of the licence of THESPIUS's cart. It was usual for the strollers, who followed the fortunes of that poet, as they passed through the towns of Greece, to railly the foibles, and satyrize the vices of the people. Is that practice forgotten? Far from it. You do the very same thing at this day by encouragement, which was then done by connivance. Nay, ridicule has enlarged its province, and takes the range of the state, as well as of domestic conduct, and treats the measures of a nation with the same levity, wherewith it handles the follies of private men." "Why, said ARISTOPHANES, if I must be grave with you now, it shall be to defend my laughing at another time. Are you serious in what you urge; or do you only contend, after the manner of a Sophist, for the exercise of

your logic and eloquence? If you are serious, I intreat you to consider, whether it is not the employment of philosophers to strip things of their false colours, and represent them in their native ones. You call it levity to ridicule the absurd management of the public. But if the public deserves it, what shall protect it from the strokes of that keen weapon? Address it with flattery, you spoil its sense, suffer it to acquiesce in what is wrong, give a sanction to that formality, which forbids the approaches of advice, and do an injury to its interests. Address it with freedom, you improve its understanding, set it on its guard, teach it to despise formality, and maintain the honour of your country.”

“That will bear a debate, returned I. Wise men have expressed a contempt for ceremony and external distinctions, till they have let fools into the secret, and begin to find the want of them for their own security. There are some persons in such stations, and some bodies of men of such importance, that they can do nothing, which is trifling in its consequences, however frivolous in itself. So that, instead of beginning the laugh, we should affect a solemn air, when we speak of their actions. For in all, that concerns the public, even a mistaken seriousness may be regarded as virtue.”

“But suppose, rejoined he, that every application of ridicule, either to the faults of the public, or of particulars, is agreeable to the majority of a people.”

“And to speak out fairly, said I, it is that, which I do not comprehend. The Athenians excel the eastern monarchs in their encouragement to these monitors. It is enough for the king of Persia, that a slave daily reminds him, when he wakes, of his mortality; but he hires no slaves to ape the singularities of his manner, and tell him, that he is a tyrant and a fool. Yet this is a just image of what is done in Athens.”

“I perceive, said ARISTOPHANES, the whole business of popular government is a mystery to you.” “If,

continued I, the people corrected their errors, when they saw them; if they applied the scenes of ridicule to the purposes of seriousness; I should admire their patience of censure, and applaud their wisdom. But as the case now stands, they persist in what is wrong, while they laugh at it, and laugh at what is right, while they approve, and should practice it." "Is there any thing, replied ARISTOPHANES, so extraordinary in that conduct? Does not your friend SOCRATES sneer at the popular religion, and yet conform to it? Does not EURIPIDES condemn the theology of the poets, and yet gravely use it?" "We shall never agree, resumed I; but as I cannot understand, what influences the people in this point, so there is one thing, which I cannot understand in you. It is frequent with you to reproach the tragic poet with impiety; and your writings condemn a neglect of the worship enjoined by the legislator in several citizens, whose names your actors recite, and whose persons they distinguish to the audience. At the same time you do not scruple to introduce those very Deities in the lowest and most absurd lights; to represent them as the shadowy beings of an allegory; as either the deceivers, or the dupes of mortals." "By HERCULES, said he, you begin to be too solemn for me; but your objection is built on a mistake. Have not you lived long enough in Athens to know, that the Græcians would no more bear a ridicule on the religion of their country from ARISTOPHANES, than they would bear an attack on moral virtue from your favourite * EURIPIDES? What then is it, which procures a toleration for me? I'll tell you. They know the difference between the fables of the poets, and the theology of the law-givers. The Gods of HOMER are visionary characters; but the Gods of SOLON distribute real blessings to mankind. The

* See Letter XCIV.

JUPITER of poetry is a being compounded of the most depraved passions, which are incident to our frail nature ; but the JUPITER of the state is father and king of Gods and men. The former exists no where but in the debauched and irregular fancy of mythologists ; but the latter was raised to heaven for his virtues, and remains there the object of universal adoration. So that a little attention will inform you, I take freedoms with that set of Deities, who are the creatures of poetic licence, but pay homage to those, whose merit is either declared by the laws, or acknowledged by tradition." " Should I admit, returned I, that there is some weight in your answer, yet I am convinced, that many minds are not capable of conceiving it. When the vulgar listen to the tales of the priest, do you think they separate the hidden meaning of what he says, from the gross wrapper, in which he offers it ? Can you then fancy, that they reason nicely on the Gods of poetry, while they are listening to a comedy ? But though you treat the fables of ORPHEUS, LINUS, MUSÆUS, HOMER, with so little ceremony ; yet you might be more candid methinks to the verses of their descendants, ÆSCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, and EURIPIDES, whom you laugh at, to the discredit of their compositions, and the injury of your own." " How so ! cried he. A good parody is a compliment to the poet, because none but the best things are honoured with it ; and it is to the purpose of my plays, because it adds to the entertainment, which they give." " I maintain both parts of my assertion, said I. The first, because every swelling expression of tragedy or empty line is aggravated without mercy ; the last, because your dialogue would be more proper and natural, and therefore more agreeable without it. Besides, parody has something of the mimic, not the poet ; of buffoon imitation, not original invention. It is for this reason I could wish to see comedy on a different footing from the pre-

sent. If the tragic writers draw their plot from the marvellous, they conduct it in such a manner, as to lower it to the probable; but if you lay down a plot, which is probable, you manage it so fantastically, as to heighten it to the marvellous. The speeches, which they insert in the conversation of the drama, conduce to unravel the main incident; but you frequently throw in an absurd incident for the sake of introducing a speech. Personal reflections ought likewise to be avoided. Expose the vice, without insulting the vicious. Let the check of conscience restrain, without exciting a general contempt or odium. As the painter formed the idea of his VENUS from compounding the most perfect features of different beauties; so the poet should collect the moral deformities of his characters from that variety, which the weakness of mankind affords him; as the bee extracts an uniform and original sweetness from the borrowed flavours of innumerable plants; so the gall of satire and comedy should be drawn from all the vices and follies of the times." "CLEANDER, interrupted ARISTOPHANES, I shall not contend with you, though I have clearly the better in this controversy. You remind me of what THUCYDIDES observed of PERICLES; "Whenever I have thrown him, said he, he has the impudence to assert the contrary, and I am almost infatuated enough to believe him."

The charge of impudence from the comic poet was so unexpected and emphatical, that, though it should have put him out of countenance, it unsettled me; and I hastened away from him abruptly.

L E T T E R CLXVI.

ORSAMES to CLEANDER. From Taoces.

THERE is a cessation, thou knowest, from all kinds of business, during the great festival*, which ends the year. Those days of leisure ARTÆUS determined to give to a part of his family, who are almost tempted to repine at his constant and successful application to his country's service; so seldom does it permit us to enjoy the most condescending parent, the most improving companion. He now saw Taoces for the first time, and was wonderfully struck with the situation and the improvements so adapted to it. He spent whole days among the woods; he entered into the design of every building and plantation; and would here and there propose the leading down a stream, or the gaining a new point of view, with the greatest propriety. One evening, as we were sitting round him upon the great terras, that commands the prospect of the gulph, and he was observing to us the freshness of the air, the smoothness of the sea, and the tender colours of the sky just after sun-set; my PARMYS, laying her hand gently upon his, said, with that unaffected sweetness peculiar to her, "My dearest father will not imagine, I wish

* According to HYDE de Relig. Vet. Pers. the principal feast of the ancient Persians was on the last ten days of the year, in memory of the creation, which they supposed was then compleated. This must be the festival here alluded to.

his pleasure less, when I take notice, how great it is. But I own myself surprized to find you thus affected by these beauties of ours; and that the multitude of affairs, with which you are perpetually surrounded, has not extinguished the taste for these airy delights, the amusements of the idle and the speculative." "To what an uncomfortable state, replied he, would you reduce us, that, because these natural, these unmixed pleasures are rarely indulged to us, we must be denied even the power of feeling them! Believe me, the very different way of life I am in, and the short intervals it allows me of quiet and retirement, do but quicken my relish for them. Not that variety is their principal charm: there is something in their very nature to excite the desires of a good mind; and it must be a narrow and illiberal spirit, and qualified merely for the forms and drudgery of affairs, that can be so immersed in business, as not to look beyond it. We serve the public, for it is our duty; our allegiance obliges us, our friends, our families demand it of us. But there is a term to all these labours, which the greatest men have ever been ready to seize. When the vigour of their age has been given to their country, and the charge of indolence and selfishness can no longer be brought against them, such a retreat, such a manner of life, as your's at Taoces, has been the end of their wishes. Your CLEANDER, continued he, turning to me, is full of these ideas; he thinks his political life has been long enough; and in every dispatch to his patron GOBRYAS fights after the banks of the Pactolus, where the king has assigned him the reward of his faithful services." "Is he then about leaving Greece?" said I hastily. "No, replied ARTÆUS, the present conjuncture will scarce permit it. But he has behaved so well in all parts of his employment, and his desire of retirement is so sincere, that I am not for banishing him longer

than is necessary, and shall assist his petition the first opportunity that offers."

Thou wilt believe, dear CLEANDER, that I was highly pleased to hear my father talk thus. Upon such occasions, where his good-nature and humanity are to be exerted, he never speaks less than he intends; and I cannot but promise myself, that thou wilt soon be restored to the arms of thy friends. Here thou wilt be most cordially welcome. I am impatient to make thee acquainted with every particular of my happiness. For happy I am in my new situation to the extent of my desires. Not, because, as successor to SISAMNES, I am thus early ranked among the principal satraps, and command in Hyrcania; nor that, when I look round from this lofty promontory, my own possessions compose the various landscape. It is not the palaces, the villas, the elegant furniture, the magnificent equipage, that I would boast to thee. SISAMNES gave infinitely more than all these, when with his dying hand he gave me his daughter. Her figure, her air, her voice, all express that graceful ease and engaging softness, which run through her whole character. But the humblest sense of her own excellencies, and a shines of applause, however deserved, permit her friends alone to know, that to the delicate beauties of a female mind she adds the stronger features of a manly understanding; an apprehension instantly to seize, and a taste exactly to determine the merit of whatever comes before her; a firmness, yet only tried in the little occurrences of life, but which may be equally depended upon in the most important cases; a popular benevolence, which makes all, who approach her, easy; and a nicety in her friendship, which keeps off the forward and undeserving. Fondly to lean on such a bosom, to have such a heart entirely mine to retire to, can I form a wish beyond it? Here, perplexed with court-factions, and fatigued

with public business, I may deposit all my cares; think them over again, assisted by the truest good sense; or lose all thought of them in the tenderest endearments. And here, in my happier hours, these seasons of domestic life, do I find a perpetual source of delights; a taste for the same amusements, a spirit to invent new scenes of entertainment, and an unaffected compliance with those proposed by others.

For we here are not in solitude; a select party of friends share with us, and improve the pleasures of the place. AZANE never leaves us; she is of a turn more lively and eager than my PARMYS, but has a heart amiable as her sister's. The daughter of the Destoor * of Sogdiana was educated in this family, and is looked upon as a part of it. You know her sufficiently by the Hymn to the Night, which CHARICLES brought you; and your Greek compliment of the tenth Muse is, I assure you, by no means an extravagant one. Our company of the other sex are the old partners of my Bactrian studies; and some of our young nobility, who are connected with me in the public service, and whose conduct and way of thinking give them still a more honourable distinction. Thou knowest, CLEANDER, how I enjoy such a society as this; PARMYS and AZANE are no less taken with it. But what a wretch should I have been, had I entered into a family incapable of these rational entertainments? And when I look round the court, how do I wonder at my good fortune? As fashion has a stronger influence over the fair sex, they are more generally degenerated from the old Persian severity, than we are. The becoming reserve, the household-virtues

* Destoor, a title of dignity among the Magi. HYDE writes it Destur, and says there was one of them over the priests of every province. Note by the Translator.

of our mother's, are the subjects of ridicule ; and the women's apartments have lost that air of inviolable sanctity, that used to surround them. An eternal round of trifling pleasures leaves no room for improvement or reflection ; weakens the nobler faculties, and exposes the mind to any impressions. Hence ridiculous fears, impotent passions, extravagant desires, and a long train of follies too often ending in vice and infamy.

At Taoces thou wilt meet with none of this riot and impertinence ; all here is calm and natural : the manners of the last age, set off by the elegance of ours. Make haste then, and join in our conversations ; they are imperfect without thee. As soon as ever the state of Græcian politics can spare thee, throw thyself at the feet of ARTAXERXES, dispatch the last business before the council of seven, and begin thy retirement with us. For think not, we will suffer the improvements, thou art projecting at thy Lydian farms, to engross thee. Here I can promise you an absolute liberty of enjoying your friends, or your own reveries ; people, who will receive you chearfully, not pursue you impertinently ; and a most attentive audience to every circumstance of your negotiations, and the greatest wonders of your travels.

W.

L E T T E R CLXVII.

CLEANDER to HARBAHAL of Sidon, admiral of the Persian gallies. From Athens.

I no sooner heard, that by the favour of our gracious monarch thou wert promoted to the distinguished rank, which thou now holdest in his service, than I determined to congratulate thee in the most affectionate manner.

My private friendship and gratitude for the bravery, which thou once exertedst in rescuing me with thy single trireme out of the hands of that terror of the Mediterranean, the pirate SOSTRATUS, oblige me not to be silent on this occasion. But my zeal for the honour and safety of the empire, and my thorough conviction, how much thy advancement will contribute towards both, render the satisfaction I take in it more meritorious, by heightening it from a social into a public virtue. Let me first, like a good subject, applaud the wisdom of ARTAXERXES, who, instead of following the two numerous precedents of former reigns, in throwing away so important a post upon some upstart favourite, as the price of court-servility and mean arts, or an indolent prince of the blood, ruled by men of worse principles, but more discernment, than himself, has, on the contrary, filled it with the ablest and most active naval officer in his dominions,

It is from thy firmness and experience, valiant HARBAHAL, that I expect a very considerable reform in the management of our fleets. Thy duty to thy sovereign calls upon thee, not to suffer his service to be neglected in the manner it has hitherto been. Thy parts and knowledge will suggest the fittest methods of improvement; and the genius of the present vigorous administration will enable thee to carry them into execution with spirit and effect.

I have often been offended at that severe and inconvenient practice, which prevails as well in manning our fleets, as recruiting our armies; I mean that of forcing the rude inhabitants of the villages to enlist themselves upon any exigency, and driving them in chains on board the ships, which are thus filled with unskilful, useless, and discontented sailors, ready either for mutiny, or flight; whilst the provinces are drained of those, whose industry should enrich the soil with tillage, and adorn the face of it with plantations.

Another great and growing evil in our fleets has been a remissness of discipline. I have heard such, as were well acquainted with the transactions of that time, complain, that, during the long war against the Greeks, many instances were notorious, where the commanders had failed in their duty, had fled before an inferior force, abandoned the merchants under their convoy to the enemy, and missed the most favourable opportunities of acting; and yet not the least punishment ensued, and scarce the slight disgrace of a reprimand was inflicted upon the offenders.

I am afraid, the rust and inactivity of peace has not much contributed towards the necessary work of reformation in these particulars. I have heard, that many officers have

arrived at preferment in the gallies, which thou commandest, whose names, in times of danger and action, would not have been heard of. Let it be thy care to answer the expectations of the public, by discountenancing such abuses. Suppress the burdensome method, in which the numbers of the ships companies are made up, by erecting nurseries for seamen, and inviting them by rewards and good treatment from all parts of the empire. Represent with a decent boldness to the ministry, when improper advancements are meditated; nor be afraid of losing an interest in the inner palace, which will be amply repaid to thee in the affection of the sailors, the esteem of the worthy and disinterested, and the weight thou must at last acquire in the councils of thy prince.

Excuse, my gallant friend, the freedom I have taken in offering my sentiments, inconsiderable as they are, upon matters, which have occasionally fallen under my observation, and in which thou hast been conversant thy whole life. But the example I have before my eyes of this republic, which merely by the strength of its naval force has raised itself to such an envied height of reputation and power, must frequently turn the attention of a thinking man to speculations of this nature, and may, perhaps, excite thy curiosity to know, what remarks my long residence here has enabled me to make on the advantages, which Athens has secured to herself by the extent of her commerce, and the protection of her floating bulwarks.

* The former was, before this war broke out, in so flourishing a condition, that scarce a merchant-ship of

* Many of the observations in the following part of this letter are confirmed by *ΞΕΝΟΦΩΝ* in his tracts, *περὶ πολιτείας* and *περὶ πόρων*.

any of the neighbouring states navigated these seas, without taking the Piræus in her voyage; and not only found the readiest and best vent for her own cargo, but replaced it either with the native commodities of the place, oil, honey, and corn, or those of foreign countries, which are always laid up in the well-stored magazines of its traders. Nor need I mention how much, by the universal resort of foreigners, the Athenians have enriched their peculiar dialect, above the rest of Greece, with the choicest and most significant expressions, without debasing its purity and elegance by the mixture. Their correspondence with Sicily, Cyprus, and the coasts of Asia Minor, has always supplied them with plenty and variety of the best provisions at no extravagant rates. A more extraordinary circumstance, which I cannot help adding under this head, is, that Athens is the only state in Greece, or any other country I know of, where a general opulence enables even the lower kind of people to live with ease and convenience, and that chiefly by the frequency of public sacrifices, at which large doles of flesh and bread are distributed to the poor, and the number of edifices, as baths, gymnasia, &c. erected at the public charge for the use of all the citizens. And notwithstanding the unavoidable inconveniences, with which commerce, and the benefits derived from it, must always be embarrassed, during a state of hostility between nation and nation, it may easily be proved, that the Peloponnesian trade and navigation have suffered in an infinitely larger proportion than the Athenian, by the continuance of this breach. For since the action at Pylus, the fleets of the latter are masters of the sea without controul, and not only superior to the scattered squadrons of the enemy, but numerous enough to protect their own commerce, and interrupt their rivals; and, what is of the highest consequence, to oblige even neutral powers to carry on an almost exclusive traffic with this republic, and not to ex-

port their naval stores, or the products of their looms and their mines, without its knowledge and consent.

Another principal and distinguishing superiority, which the naval strength of the Athenians has afforded them through the whole course of the war, and which alone has proved sufficient to disconcert the best-framed projects of their adversaries, is, that whenever the allies have taken the surest method of distressing them, by laying waste Attica, investing its metropolis, and obliging the proprietors of the land to cry out for a peace, an Athenian fleet has never failed to prevent the bad consequences of their designs, by keeping their maritime places in perpetual alarm, harassing the coasts, perhaps seizing an important post, (as they have done this year in Laconia,) and obliged the enemies, before their troops had made any progress, to recal them for their own defence; inasmuch, that, all circumstances considered, though particular persons have suffered by captures, and the owners of the soil been considerably impoverished, the Athenians having been able to support their trade, and to obtain several signal advantages, particularly one this summer, which is pretty decisive, may be said to weigh heaviest in the balance of Greece; and unless they make the object of the war more extensive than they can well take in, or feel the influence of Persia in the opposite scale, must, in all human probability, come out of it with an increase both of reputation and territory.

I might carry this speculation still further, and assert, that were the seat of the Athenian government and their naval strength transferred from the continent into a neighbouring island, (though of no greater extent and fruitfulness than Attica) their power would be esteemed twice as considerable. For not to insist upon the additional secu-

rity against conquest and invasion, which would result from the sea's being their barrier on all sides, it would entirely remove the greatest danger, to which the republic is exposed in its present situation; for these yearly devastations are the grounds of perpetual animosities in one part of the citizens against the other. The owners of the land, and their tenants, (a very useful and considerable part of the community) see their lands ravaged, their farms laid in ruins, and their families deprived of subsistence, by the frequent incursions of the Peloponnesians; whilst the trierarchs and land officers are enriching themselves with the plunder of the enemy, and from the protection afforded to trade, the Piræus is crowded with the vessels of its opulent merchants, either carrying out the commodities of Athens, or bringing back those of other countries in return. The land-holders being therefore with good reason weary of the continuance of the war, are reproached by the opposite party with wishing well to the arms of Lacedæmon. The case would be infinitely worse, if the allies were to make themselves masters of any considerable fortress in Attica, which by an unaccountable misconduct they have not hitherto attempted. The internal feuds might then rise so high, as to become really dangerous to the state; the clamours of peace almost at any rate must increase; and whilst foreign assistance might be so easily called in by those, who disliked the proceedings of the majority, the occasion would be inviting to such as were determined to risk the public safety for the sake of gratifying their own revenge.

The conclusion from what I have been saying is evident, that an insular situation would go to the root of this increasing evil, and tend to unite the two jarring interests, which unhappily prevail at the present juncture within

the walls of Athens. What has been already advanced, may likewise inculcate another maxim, that without an extended commerce first obtained, the revenues of Persia would never raise a fleet able to venture a battle for the empire of the sea, though they were all employed in that single service. It is constant practice, and variety of maritime employment, that produces a hardy and numerous breed of sailors, of experienced and gallant officers. It is trade alone, which can improve naval architecture by exercising the ingenuity of able shipwrights and artificers, and keeping them in constant business. Without the demands, which trade occasions, the magazines will never be sufficiently furnished with regular supplies of military stores, and other naval provisions, to repair a defeat, or improve a victory.

From these short hints, sagacious HARBAHAL, I leave it to thy judgment to pronounce, whether the most powerful and wealthy monarch must ever think of establishing, his dominion on the floods, unless he first encourages, for a long course of years, the arts of peace, navigation, and commerce. If in any future times some enterprising prince should arise, and after his utmost efforts flatter himself with having carried so preposterous a scheme into practice, be assured, his imaginary empire over that fickle element will sink on the first reverse of fortune, and in its duration resemble the transitory insect of the Hypanis*, which outlives not the day of its nativity. Farewel.

P.

* A river in Sarmatia, now called the Bog.

L E T T E R C L X V I I I .

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

IF the religion of Persia wanted any other recommendation, than its agreeableness to the genuine and uncorrupted dictates of reason; if it required any comparison with others, to shew its superiority, and set off its excellence to advantage, I know of none, that would answer the purpose better, than the Athenian. The one is a steady and uniform plan, wherein the notion of one supreme being, the essential duties that flow from thence, and the same scheme of religious service, have been kept pure and unchanged through a succession of many ages. The other is always in an unsettled and fluctuating state, ever increasing the catalogue of its divinities, and consequently altering the ceremonial of its worship. For the religious institutions of Athens have all along been conformable to the customs, and gone through the gradual refinements of civil life; and besides her singular complaisance in adopting the Gods of all other countries, with whom she has any intercourse, she finds frequent occasions of admitting new ones of her own by a solemn act of the great council.

Whether their minds here are not enough enlarged to have any notion of a Deity, whose comprehensive view can take in the whole compass of the creation, and whose

power can regulate all the various parts of nature ; or whether they think, that the administration of so vast and extensive a province must disquiet the mind, and diminish the happiness of any being ; however this be, they divide the government of the world among a number of tutelary divinities, each of which exercises a kind of local jurisdiction, and presides with uncontrouled and independent authority over his own particular district. As each has a peculiar mode of worship, his proper set of ministers, and distinguishing catalogue of rites, their interests are happily kept separate, and they subsist without any interfering or enmity. Each religious system, circumscribed, as it were, within the orb of its own influence, has no malign aspect towards any other ; but their respective votaries, satisfied with the free exercise of the service, which is appointed to be paid to their patron God, entertain no jealousies about, nor are inclined to call in question, the pretensions of the rest.

But however confined and limited in their authority the Athenians suppose these presiding powers to be, they are careful to make their religious application to them at stated times, besides such seasons, as more particularly incline them to apply for their assistance ; for they think nothing happens without their cognizance, or can be brought to a happy issue without their concurrence. Their manner of supplicating is with green boughs of laurel or olive in their hands, twisted round with wool, and with garlands on their heads ; all which particularities have a meaning, but too mystical or refined to be entered into. The posture of the petitioner is different on different occasions ; but the humility of it is suited in some sort to the greatness of the distress the supplicant is in, and the dignity of the Divinity. They sometimes prostrate themselves on the thresholds of the temples ; sometimes with reverential awe kiss the feet,

or embrace the knees; or, if they are more sanguine in their expectations of assistance, presume to touch the chin or cheeks of the sacred statues; on which, as they are visible representations of their Deities, intended to excite or enliven their piety, they are not sparing in the ornaments they bestow, either as to the niceness of the workmanship, or costliness of the materials.

How much better, if any images or outward exhibitions of the Deity are necessary in our devotional exercises; how much more fitted to heighten our admiration, as well as inform the understanding, are our Mithriac figures? For at the same time, that they make a more magnificent display of the divine glory, and afford a more proper symbol of his presence and emblem of his purity, they contribute to the improvement of the worshippers, and serve to imprint on their minds a general knowledge of the planetary system.

The Athenians are very particular, both in their public and private offices of devotion, in specifying what testimonies of divine power they are desirous of obtaining; and on some occasions they mention such of their allies, as they wish may share with them in the benefits they ask for. But the Spartans are more humble and reserved in their petitions, modestly referring all events to the wise and gracious disposal of their Deities, and only requesting in general, what may most promote their honour, and conduce to their happiness.

On some important and interesting occasions, they have public supplications of many days continuance; during which, as they are devoted wholly to religious matters, business of every other kind is suspended. At these times the statues of the Gods, which are supposed to be informed

with some degree of intelligence, are often placed on beds of marble or wood, that they may share personally in the entertainment instituted to their honour. When they are beset with any imminent danger, they have petitionary hymns, in which they celebrate the glory of their tutelary Deity, and then invite him to reside among them. His arrival is ushered in with great form, and as soon as their difficulties are got over, his departure is attended with equal solemnity. When they are besieging the cities of their neighbours, they have particular forms of evocation to draw over the guardian Gods of the place to their party. In these they promise them a most honourable reception; and unless they succeed in this application, they imagine all endeavours by fraud or force will be ineffectual.

Some, who pretend to a nearer intercourse with the Gods, offer their petitions in an unknown tongue. These words, they affirm, have a natural meaning, and were the original language of mankind; but their intention is doubtless to practise upon the credulous and unwary vulgar, who are apt to receive with the more reverence what they are not able to understand.

When they are seated on the hearth, the place consecrated to the household of Gods, it is not usual to make any verbal requests; their silence, and the sadness of their garb, the ashes, and the humility of their situation, being supposed to speak with more force and energy of persuasion, than any expression that could be uttered. In cases of extremity, the petitioners sometimes tear their hair in a frantic manner, and offer it to the Deity. This method of supplication is thought more expressive of their distress, and more likely to move compassion. But a custom prevails at Sparta, that I can hardly mention without indignation and

horror: at one of their celebrated festivals they tear the backs of their youth with whips before an altar of DIANA; and think the blood, that is shed by that severe operation, acceptable to the Goddesses. Their parents are usually present and encourage their sons to bear this piece of pious discipline, with a resolution worthy of a Laconian education. Is it not, venerable SMERDIS, bringing down the nature of divine beings too much to the human standard, to suppose them to be prevailed upon by the mere earnestness and importunity of their votaries? But to imagine, that they expect such acts of unnatural rigour, or are pleased with the misery of their creatures, is surely to assimilate them to tyrants, and pervert the goodness and rectitude of their disposition to a resemblance with the basest of mankind.

G.

L E T T E R CLXIX.

CLEANDER to SMERDIS.

OF all the parts of that compounded and multifarious worship, which is here in use, sacrificing is esteemed to be of the most consequence, and is of course attended with the most solemnity. But it seems not now to be considered, according to its primary institution, as a suitable expression of men's gratitude and token of their dependance; but rather as a donation, made expressly to conciliate the favour of the Gods, and engage them to be more heartily in the interest of him, who bestows it. When simple cakes and water, and the spontaneous productions of nature, were offered, the efficacy of offerings was not supposed to consist so much in the value of the thing, as in the warm emotions of a thankful heart. But now the more noble and costly the oblation, the more likely it is thought to answer the purpose of ingratiating the donor; and therefore it is not to be wondered at, if these religious entertainments are often furnished out with the utmost luxury and profusion of expence.

The very altars, on which their sacrifices are made, retain nothing of the primæval plainness. They were at first only little heaps of earth or turfs, set apart for the sacred use, by a small libation. But the consecrations are now become a matter of great cost and ostentation; and they run into the greatest extravagancies of fancy in the structure of them, as to the figure in which they are made, the materials of which they consist, and the ornaments by which they are distinguished.

If any one should judge of the state of religion at Athens by the number of its altars, he could not fail of receiving impressions very much in favour of their piety. For not only the temples, and mountains, and sacred groves abound with them, but they are to be found in every place of concourse, whether for business, amusement, or exercise, in the fields and walks, the highways and hippodrome; so that some of them are always at hand for the civil purposes of ratifying private alliances, or public treaties; and whoever is in a fit of devotion, or case of difficulty, can hardly ever want an immediate opportunity of explaining his wants, or expressing his gratitude.

One circumstance, inviolably observed in the situation of them, is peculiar enough. Such as are consecrated to the celestial Gods, are raised above the level of the ground; and such as are appropriated to the infernal ones, are sunk below it; the number of steps, by which the approach is made to every one, exactly marking out the rank and dignity, which each particular Deity holds in their ritual.

They draw near to these sacred places, as being in some secret and inexplicable manner the supposed abode of their Divinities, with the utmost veneration; and some remarkable strokes of divine resentment have fallen upon such, as have been daring enough to omit the least tittle of this religious observance. One was said to have been struck with lightning, not long ago, for presuming to approach an altar of JUPITER with unwashed hands. Slaves, persons of immoral lives, or base birth, are entirely excluded from them, except in HERCULES's temple at Cynosarges, where some indulgence is shewn to the last upon a very reasonable account, because that God himself lay under no small suspicion of illegitimacy.

The matter of their sacrifices has always had a near affinity to the different methods of living, that obtained in different ages; though the best and choicest of every kind is with great care selected for these religious uses. Of both which practices a very easy and obvious account may be given; for men have been generally so partial in their own favour, as to imagine, that the Gods would be best pleased with such things, as give most pleasure to themselves; and those besides, who are concerned in this act of worship, have always a certain portion of the offering assigned to them, and share with the Gods in the entertainment. For the same reason perhaps it is, that cups are always to be presented full, it being esteemed irreverent to allot any thing for the Gods, that is not perfect in its kind; though wine was for a long time excluded from their sacrificial feasts, through a conceit, which the multitude had entertained, of its profaneness, on account of the vine's having sprung from the blood of the Titans. At Sparta indeed, where they are less nice in what they eat, they are less scrupulous in what they offer.

At what time living creatures came to be slain, as proper offerings to the Gods, is not a settled point; as it is far from being a satisfactory one, why they were slain at all. But the true cause and date of this usage, as well as I can learn from conversation, or written memorials, seem to be, that they began to be in use as sacrifices, soon after they were in esteem as food. The connexion between these things I have hinted at above. The labouring ox was indeed for some time spared at Athens; but importunate appetite at last prevailed, and the delicacy of his flesh was an overmatch for every consideration of use or gratitude; though a strange custom, which yet prevails here, seems to shew, that the Athenians are in some doubt as to the lawfulness of this practice; for the person, who has killed the

victim, immediately retires, and leaves the axe behind him, to be proceeded against in a judicial way, as being most concerned in, and answerable for the guilt of the action.

The Athenians offer sacrifices in return for benefits received, as well as in expectation of receiving them. As to the kind of these offerings, each Deity has his favourite and consecrated animal. Their reasons for such appropriations are sometimes intelligible; but they run generally into infinite subtilty and refinement. Some regard is likewise had to the circumstances of the offerer, and the solemnity of the occasion; from the pomp of the hecatomb, used commonly to distinguish the inauguration of kings, or triumphant return of conquerors, to the beggar's cheap and humble acknowledgment by only kissing his right hand. But I have sometimes smiled at the expensive and ostentatious gratitude of one of our Grecian philosophers, who sacrificed a hundred head of cattle to the Gods, for the extraordinary assistance he had received in the discovery of a geometrical proposition.

How much more agreeable to good sense and the nature of things was the original plainness and simplicity of Athens in her religious worship, than after all her boasted advances in arts and politeness! How much more conformable to that religion, over which thou presidest with so great faithfulness and dignity! which teaches us, that whatever or whenever we eat, we should offer up a small part of it to the supreme Being, out of a dutiful sense of his bounty, and supplicate his forgiveness for the liberty we take in applying his creatures to our own support and preservation.

L E T T E R CLXX.

SMERDIS to CELANDER.

THE Greeks, CLEANDER, are in our armies, and fleets. They traffic in all our provinces, and the court itself is not free from them. I think I find now and then a Persian tinctured by their conversation. In discourse with a friend, who is not the strictest observer of our religion and laws, I was amazed to hear him say, he thought himself under obligation to be virtuous, though the blessed OROMASDES had promised no reward to virtue. I declare to thee, the sentiment was so new to me, that I did not know, whether to commend the disinterestedness that appeared in it, or condemn the self-sufficiency of it, and the neglect it discovered to the bounty of OROMASDES.

“ The great rule, said he, of right and wrong is obvious to all; every society supposes its members acquainted with it, and builds its laws thereupon. He who will deny, that actions are distinguishable into honest, brave, generous, and their contraries, abjures his reason; the use of which is no other than to enable him to distinguish things, as they are in nature; and the man, who would strip himself naked, and bask in the sunshine for coolness, or lie down upon a pointed rock for ease, acts as wisely and properly, as he, who would count

it the same to give an hungry person bread, or a stone; or to inflict stripes upon the innocent, and the guilty. The rule is easy and undeniable; to follow it is to act our proper part; to neglect it, is to deny our nature, and the nature of all things: it is a rule, which OROMASDES has not made for the government of our actions, but pursued it in his own. Before creation, he comprehended in his view the exact image of all things, though not yet in being; matter with all its variety of forms, relations, and effects; animal appetites, and rational powers. In this vast idea of innumerable parts, he perceived some fit for ends, which others were not; that infinite use and beauty would result from the coalescence of these, and the separation of those. As an ingenious artist in contriving a curious machine examines and rejects the imperfect schemes, that occur to him, till he can collect from amongst them the true model to work upon. Thus the almighty Artificer submitted to work, according to the relations which things must bear one to another; universal nature was copied from a model in the divine mind, in which we can observe no blemish, because order was there preferred to confusion, and truth to inconsistency.

After creation commenced the moral œconomy of the Deity, which, according to the same rule of truth, will find an exact recompence for the virtuous, and a suitable vengeance for the wicked. But why? is it not because this is treating human actions condignly; and the divine wisdom cannot misapply its rewards? The truly wise man then looks upon actions in the same light with God; he considers virtue as distinguished in nature from vice, and thinks it amiable enough to be followed for its own sake, and if the Almighty recompence such a

conduct, he accepts that bounty with thankfulness, which was no motive to his actions. To follow a reward, and to follow virtue, are to him things widely different; the pursuit of this is ever honourable, and founded in reason; the other is no more than self-interest and cunning, the basest motives for the guidance of a reasonable creature."

"My friend, said I, I confess it is the cursed AHRI-MAN alone, the author of misrule, who would confound truth and falsehood, light and darkness; who would make his sway universal by dissolving the ties of virtue, which unite all the parts of the kingdom of OROMASDES. He indeed observes this rule of truth through all his works; for his wisdom exhibits it to his view, and approves it, and nothing can divert him from acting according to it. But surely you would not, without any farther inducements, prescribe the same rule to man, who would find such difficulty in the observance, and a bias so frequently to decline from it. And should we suppose, that the virtuous man, at the hazard of all his interests, pursues it throughout; will not this extraordinary paradox be the result, that the virtuous man excels his Creator, since he governs his actions by the same common rule, but with greater danger and disinterestedness? A deduction so clear, and at the same time so absurd, is sufficient to convince us, that our arguments are somewhere false.

To say the truth, happiness so clearly touches every being, that it must be its first concern. Let that be secured, (as in the supreme Being it is beyond all possibility of change) and then it will be at liberty to observe the beauty and force of this law; which I cannot but

approve in its own nature, but should be as ridiculous to pursue to my own misery, as a poor man to squander away, out of an affected generosity, the small means necessary for his own preservation. Disinterestedness is madness in a creature, who has constant intimations of his misery and weakness; and unless self-preservation could be reconciled with the rule of virtue, this would not have been the measure of human actions. We trust therefore, that OROMASDES will not let us suffer for our adherence to virtue; but that we shall be recompensed for any interruption of our happiness in its pursuit. Such a confidence enables us to act without apprehension, and brings us near to the circumstances of the Deity, whose happiness is altogether consistent with the rule of his actions. As a philosopher then I should think, that the perfect law of truth was immediately, and for its own sake, regarded by the Deity alone; and by all created beings through him. I do not hereby deny the universality of this law, but only take into it a consideration of our dependance on him, whence we had our being. What more just than this? Nor is it ungenerous and mercenary, as you seem to think; for I would follow virtue steadily, while I might with tranquillity; and when I could not do this, I would still follow virtue, provided you will let me assure myself, (what cannot be excluded from the mind of man) that my conduct is approved by the Deity, and that he will some time vindicate it by his favour. And on my part, to shew all the disinterestedness, that a needy creature can do, I will not pretend to prescribe terms to him, nor ask when, or where; though it be beyond the grave, and in worlds to come, I am contented; and thereby shew a generous confidence in my Maker."

This was my answer, CLEANDER; and I confess I know no better. All religion is declaredly on my side. I think too I have the authority of all legislators for my opinion of human nature, who do not expect our obedience to laws without promising proportionable advantages. Matter of fact speaks aloud for me on every side; for where do we meet with general industry, courage, and virtues of every sort, but under the protection and encouragement of a good monarch, who gives us reason to be assured, that our best efforts in the practice of our duty will be followed by something more than the mere empty complacence, which attends it?

H.

L E T T E R C L X X I .

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

CHARICLES arrived here last night from the court at Susa, and put into my hands a dispatch from thee, with some characters inclosed, which I shall not fail to make use of in any thing, that requires great secrecy. It is impossible for me to express the concern and astonishment I felt, whilst I read the account thou givest me of the king's illness. Every melancholy idea, every fatal consequence crowded at once into my mind. But how greatly was I revived by the surprizing good effect, with which a remedy out of HIPPOCRATES was administered! ALEXIAS well deserves the honours he has received from the courtiers, who, as my nephew informs me, were preparing, when he took horse, to congratulate the king upon his recovery.

I sympathize with thee, noble scribe, in thy grief for the behaviour of TERITEUCHMES. It is scarce credible, that one, who bore the most distant affinity to thee, much less one, who by his long employment under thee, had opportunities of discerning the frequent proofs thou givest of fidelity, and an unexampled disinterestedness, should act so corrupt, so vile a part, and make so un-

grateful a return to all thy favours. The danger to myself was light, I assure thee, even in my own estimation, when compared with the detriment, which the king's affairs must have received, had his practices continued. At the same time thy friendly care on my account can never be enough acknowledged.

Surely there are times, when ARIMANIUS is busy in sowing the seeds of treachery amongst mankind, and promoting the downfall of empires by internal commotions. He has at this juncture infatuated the governors of Cyprus and Ægypt, and dazzled their eyes with the delusive glare of royalty and independance. † * * * * *
* * * * * *desunt cætera.*

P.

† Note by the Translator.] The Jewish translator informs us, that the original has in this place received some damage from fire, so that the remainder of this important dispatch is become absolutely illegible. He could just discern the traces of letters unlike any he had before met with, which he supposes were the characters mentioned to have been sent by CHARICLES, probably a kind of cypher. We cannot but condole with our readers on an accident, which has deprived them of a material anecdote relating to the above-mentioned governors, whose intended revolt was in all likelihood prevented by the vigilance and industry of CLEANDER and his patron; for we hear no more of it. It is no wonder, that the learned MESHOBAB, in the grief of his heart, protests, that he would willingly give up twice the number of pages in the Talmud, to recover those, which are defaced in his Persian MS.

The affairs of TERITEUCHMES, from the want of GORRYAS's letter, to which CLEANDER refers, is also very obscure. Thus much appears, that he was a relation of the chief scribe, who had been employed in his office, and probably intrusted with affairs of consequence; and that he betrayed what passed through his hands to PYTHON, but was detected, before his treachery had produced any bad effect. Those, who love to amuse themselves with historical parallels, may compare this accident with one

L E T T E R CLXXII.

INTAPHERNES TO CLEANDER.

WHILE thou art perhaps expecting a lively description from the pen of HYDASPES of a birth-day solemnity, I alas! CLEANDER, am inditing a letter to thee in his stead, which must turn upon a very different scene, the melancholy obsequies of that HYDASPES, our amiable friend. Such is the generosity of thy nature, that thou wilt, I dare say, lament with me his loss, from the purest motives of a disinterested friendship; whilst those, who have too little of the tender passions in their constitution, to be much affected upon the like occasions, cannot help bestowing a tear on his memory.

The last birth-day of ARTAXERXES was celebrated with more than usual pomp. When the days of public audience were expired (during which the great king is

H h 2

of the same nature, that happened to a very able minister, M. VILLO-ROU, secretary of state of K. HENRY the IVth of France. NICHOLAS DE L'HÔTE, his godson, and first commis, took a bribe of 1200 crowns per annum from the court of Spain, to give them advice of the most secret transactions in his master's department. After having continued this traitorous correspondence for some years, he was discovered in a very odd manner. The whole story, which is a curious one, may be found in SULLY's Memoirs, Vol. IV.

feated on his splendid throne to receive the addressees of his satraps, with the presents, that are sent from every province of the empire,) then all that numerous multitude, which resort to Susa upon these occasions, were feasted in that great square called the court of the garden of the king's palace *. The whole solemnity was conducted according to the ancient customs, which are well suited to the magnificence of the supreme Lord of the East. But there is one thing, which our present grief should cause to be for ever banished from these public rejoicings, that excess, which has been thought necessary to express our loyalty upon such occasions, and has too often proved fatal to the best and most temperate of his subjects. The wisdom of ARTAXERXES has long since disavowed that ridiculous privilege, which he thought inconsistent with the dignity of our monarchs, that of drinking immoderately themselves, and joining in the Persian dance † at such seasons. But let us draw a veil over this

* We have in the first chap. of the book of Esther, a full description of the magnificence of the Persian kings upon these public entertainments. We read of white, green, and blue hangings fastned with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble; that the beds were of gold and silver upon a pavement of red, blue, white, and black marble; and that the drinking vessels were of gold, the vessels being diverse one from another; and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king. We read likewise at the 8th verse, that the custom of compelling men to drink more upon such occasions, than would do them good, was very much discouraged by AHASUERUS. And as we have some reason to conclude, that the AHASUERUS, there mentioned was the same with our ARTAXERXES, one is the more surprized, that HYDASPES, who has all along through the course of these letters supported the character of a very rational kind of man, should have imposed the fatal necessity upon himself. Note by the Translator.

† For the Persian dance see ZENOPH. 6th book of the expedition of the younger CYRUS, where he thus describes it, τέλος δὲ τὸ Περσικὸν ὠρχεῖτο κροτῶν τὰς πελάτας, καὶ ὠκλασε ἀνίστατο.

indiscretion, which perhaps is the only considerable one you will find throughout the life of that excellent satrap. And indeed it is my opinion, that the hurry and fatigue he underwent in performing the ceremonials of his office, upon this grand occasion, contributed more than the royal wine, to the cause of his untimely death.

Very incapable am I of doing justice to his character, for few there are who stand in so amiable a light. None have I known more largely possessed of all those social virtues, which claim an universal esteem. None have I known so unenvied in his greatness, because such was the use he made of his interest with his sovereign, that nobody had cause to wish it less. A stranger to the low arts of flattery, he disdained to recommend himself to the favour of his prince by any of those indirect methods, or base insinuations, which are too often the practice of a court. He never professed friendship where he was not cordially sincere, much less to any person, whom he would secretly have betrayed. Nor did he ever express a zeal in any cause to which he was not by honour and principle most firmly attached. In this address and behaviour he shewed a becoming ease, a manly gracefulness; nothing effeminate, nothing fantastical. Gay without levity, and polite without affectation, he was perfectly skilled in the minutest exactnesses, and all the most circumstantial forms of a court; yet without looking upon those things as of any consideration, abstracted from their place and time. The benevolence of his disposition involuntarily shewed itself in that perpetual serenity of temper, and natural cheerfulness, which could only flow from a good mind. Sure, CLEAN-
DER, such a man does an honour to his nation, while he shines among the principal ornaments of the court. Ambassadors of foreign states, by being introduced by him to the royal presence, received a more heightened idea of the

Persian grandeur and politeness, than from all that dazzling show, which surrounds our monarch's throne. By an happy address, an agreeable condescension, and engaging affability, he had the art to reconcile strangers to our customs, however different from their own. To thee, who hast conversed and corresponded with him, I need not mention the elegance, with which he entertained his friends. Possessed with these virtues and accomplishments, he died lamented by his royal master, lamented by all, who knew his worth. For my own part so highly do I prize the reputation of his friendship, that if my name shall chance to go down to posterity, I desire no other memorial to remain of me than this, that INTAPHERNES once lived the friend of HYDASPES.

L.

L E T T E R CLXXIII.

CLEANDER to HYLLUS.

MY brother has had, I find, a regard to the satrap's recommendation; he has paid the price demanded for thee, and placed thee in my Tmolian villa. It will become thee, by thy diligence and fidelity, to shew, thou hast deserved this advancement, from a laborious employment in the old gardens of CROÆSUS, to the command over the peasants of three villages, and the care of those works, which will be the delight of thy master.

Ever since the passing of the king's grant to me, the inhabitants, no longer in fear of the royal collectors, have been remiss in bringing in the accustomed portion of their produce. This thou art by no means to allow; and if any neglect thy summons, let them know that the governor of Sardis is ready at any time to supply thee with a number of soldiers, to be quartered at thy discretion upon the defaulters, till satisfaction is made. There is another irregularity, which gives me more uneasiness; the last season of the gold-fishery, just before the tents were pitched for the officers of the treasury, some from the neighbouring farms were seen at work in the river*. Use all possible means to discover these offenders; thou knowest the severity of the laws; and let the officers in their next journey

* The Pactolus. CLEANDER's villa seems to have been situate upon this river, near the foot of mount Tmolus, famous for its saffron.

find them impaled upon the spot. What an unworthy return to my gracious lord, to suffer his revenue to be pillaged upon the very lands which I owe to his bounty !

When TELEPHANES arrives, see, that he be entertained, as becomes my friend. He will give orders for several alterations in the villa, and lay the foundation of a fire-temple : let him be supplied with such materials and workmen, as he demands. The quarry on the other side the mountain will furnish stone ; for I will not have the tomb † of ALYATTES any more defaced. On the contrary, I intend that venerable monument shall be restored : TELEPHANES will make good the base, and the five rude pyramids, with the inscriptions ; and thou must plant a large circular grove of beech in the middle, and clumps of pines at proper distances all round it. A double avenue of plane-trees must join the house to the temple ; and the banks of Gyges's lake are to be repaired, and all the variety of trees, that the soil will bear, encouraged to grow upon them. The marble busts of the King, MEGABYZUS, and GOBRYAS, are designed for the summer-portico, which looks towards the north. The statues and vases TELEPHANES will dispose amongst the plantations.

There will be sent from Ephesus twelve Spartan dogs ; the Helot, who brings them, is to feed and train them : such provisions and conveniencies, as he wants, must be allowed him. Prepare a strong inclosure by the river side for the horses of the old Persian race, out of the royal stud in Nisæ ; and another for the camels, and the asses for stal-

† HERODOTUS calls this a prodigious work, inferior only to those in Ægypt and Babylon. It was a mound of earth raised upon a basement of huge stones ; and seems to have been a circle of 1300 feet diameter.—Those rude pyramids were intire in the historian's time. Near this monument was the lake of Gyges.

ons, which ORSAMES promised me from Arabia. Thou wilt also receive from that lord some Scythian bows and hunting-spears of Damascus: let them be carefully laid up. Send back by his messengers ten measures of saffron, and take care it be of the finest growth of the mountain.

Trusty HYLLUS, I envy thee the business, I now charge thee with. I long to be employed myself among my buildings and plantations. Fear not however to lose thy office: preserve the character, that is given of thee; and thy master, when he comes, will be only thy fellow-labourer.

W.

L E T T E R CLXXIV.

CLEANDER to TERIBAZUS.

THE regular remittances thou hast made to me for a considerable time past, noble satrap, would scarce have claimed my particular acknowledgements, without the honour of thy letter, which has added the grace of private friendship to what might otherwise have seemed an ordinary effect of thy care in the execution of a public trust. I foresaw and regretted long since, that the ill designs of TIMOCLES the Eubœan would not be limited by the exercise of his unwearied malice against me, but would end in the basest ingratitude to his master. The loss of twenty talents out of thy coffers, and the villains flight, are sufficient to convince thee of it; and, like a generous enemy, thou art not ashamed to descend from thy dignity to do an act of justice to the meanest of the slaves of ARTAXERXES. The promise thou hast given me of protection relieves me from the apprehension of court-artifices; and I shall enjoy my fields of saffron, and the springs at the foot of Tmolus, in security, while I know, that my conduct is approved by every minister in the king's palace. There is something too in the reconciliation of a potent adversary, that flatters our vanity more than the continued affection of a friend: the one is often the effect of long acquaintance, prejudice, and habitual partiality; the other, even against prejudice, seems founded on the maturest result of conviction. I cannot persuade myself, that the greatness of thy mind, or the lowness of my condition, could suffer thee

to make any advances towards me, but on the most honourable motives.

Thou art desirous to know, how far I have been led by my enquiries into that, which is the peculiar object of thy attention; the sources of wealth in this country, and its revenues. The Athenians value themselves on the veins of marble, which they have kept open for many years in the mountain Hymettus: they adorn their city with it at an easy rate, and furnish it to the rest of Greece, and some parts of the lesser Asia. But what has proved of the most signal advantage, both for enriching the state and individuals, is the possession of silver mines at Laurium between the Piræus and cape Sunium. These are truly inexhaustible; and though they sometimes complain of being overstocked with labourers for the tillage of their lands, yet here is perpetual employment; they even allow strangers to search for them, if they will be at the expence of raising works. Silver being considered as the standard of commerce, they know, that the more they have of it, the greater will be the quantity annually exported by their merchants, and in return the commodities of all other countries are brought home to them; so that the public revenues are advantaged in two different ways by these works; first, by the assessment on the ore, as it comes out of the mine, and then by a custom levied on those goods, which are imported in exchange for it. Indeed it is not long, that they have made use of this benefit bestowed on them by nature for the services of the state; since before the time of THEMISTOCLES no tax was laid upon the digging of ore; but he proposed the erecting that fund, for the support of the war against the people of Ægina.

As there is a pretty general complaint for the want of miners, I cannot avoid digressing a little in this place, to

open to thee a favourite project of some persons ; which is, that a large number of slaves should be purchased by the commonwealth, to be let out to those, who have mines. A mark may be set on their habits, to distinguish them from such as are the property of private men, and a certain price paid into the treasury for the hire of them. These slaves, if properly trained, might be useful in time of war, either for the fleet or soldiery : they would always be a good defence of the fortresses at Anaphlysium and Thoricus, which cover the mines to the south, and to the north, about the distance of sixty stadia from each other : and if another castle were built between both, as a place of general rendezvous in time of danger, the silver mines might be protected better in any future invasion of their territory. This castle would be situated 500 stadia from Megara, 600 from Thebes ; so that should an enemy march either of those ways, he must pass by Athens. It is very probable therefore, that no sufficient force could be sent to disturb, much less to possess and use them. Besides all this, if better encouragement were given to strangers to settle in Attica, by releasing them from the very hazardous and disagreeable employment of serving in their ships and armies ; by allotting, as a free gift to those, who would build houses in Athens, the waste ground in several quarters of the city ; or by inviting them to settle near the mines in the country, and raise a large town there ; great estates would be made, the country would grow more populous, and the public more wealthy. But the superstitious regard, in which the name of THESEUS is held by the Athenians, and a false maxim of policy, makes them adhere to what he did for them. He very wisely incorporated the twelve cities of Cecrops, when the state was in its infancy, that their united efforts might tend under one scheme of government to the common good. Now, it seems, they are determined to raise no more cities in Attica, lest the strength of Athens be diverted, and its greatness

injured; and they rather chuse, when crouded with too many inhabitants, to send out colonies (as they did lately to Thurium) for the improvement of other countries, than to increase the inhabitants and buildings on their own soil.

I return to the revenues: The whole amount of their yearly value is 2000 talents; a considerable part of which is raised not only by the silver mines, and the customs of the Piræus, but by the loppings of the groves on the banks of the Iliffus, and the woods on the side of some of their hills. Another part arises from the duties laid on the profession of particular trades and arts, and on strangers and freed slaves. The judicial fines and amercements bring in a large sum to the state, where the free and stubborn temper of the people so greatly inclines them to litigiousness. A tenth of these is set aside for MINERVA, a fiftieth for the other Gods, and the rest is carried into the treasury. But the annual payments exacted of the tributary cities are the surest support of the public service. They were originally levied under the alarm of general danger to all Greece, when it was over-run by XERXES, and continued afterwards as contributions to enable them to make head against Persia, if a second invasion should ever be designed or attempted. ARISTIDES first collected them, and raised 460 talents. PERICLES added near a third, so as to increase them to 600. CLEON (as furious a declaimer as he was against the burdensome taxes in the last administration) has enlarged them to 800. And the fondness of the people for theatrical entertainments, the erecting temples and statues, joined to the growing charges of the war, will probably carry them much higher. Notwithstanding the number of courts and judges, before whom all proceedings are brought in a legal way, 150 talents suffice to defray their appointments; and yet by the corruption of those, who are at the

head of affairs, these revenues are every year expended by the commonwealth.

The president of the proedroi has the keys of the treasury ; but as that presidentship lasts only for a day, he is not allowed to keep them longer ; and no man is entrusted with them a second time. He takes no part in disposing the revenue, which is assigned to the care of the principal treasurer, and the comptroller of his accounts, who both wear gold rings as the badges of their dignity.

The citadel is the only place, where the wealth of the state is lodged. How disproportionate is this to the magnificence of the Persian empire ! where, thou well knowest, the four cities of Susa, Persepolis, Pafargada, and Damascus, can scarce contain the shining heaps of silks, jewels, silver and gold, which adorn the court of our monarch, raise armies, equip fleets, and create the awe and the affection of those millions, who either fear his power, or feel his liberality. Yet whence is it, that the little and comparatively poor state of Attica becomes even formidable to Asia ? Can it be for any other reason, great minister, than that superfluity depresses the mind as much as poverty ?

I will not enter into a detail of the officers in the revenue. These swarm in every corner of Athens, and the cause of it is obvious. In a government like this, the ministers, who would attach men to their service, must have a variety of employments in their power. It is very easy to find out a plausible pretext for making a new officer in the management of the public money, when it is not so in any other part of the constitution ; the consequence of which is, that the claims of dependents occasion gradual additions of this nature, which the interest of the public is at no time powerful enough to cancel.

The taxes raised in different ways by the commonwealth are paid in current money of gold and silver. Not so is it in Persia. Our coin as yet is not sufficiently settled, nor divided into various shapes of lesser value for the services of life among the vulgar. Some attempts have been made towards it: **DARIUS** gained immortal honour by the gold pieces, which bear his name. **ARYANDES** by his silver drachm even raised the envy of his master, who, in a manner very inconsistent with his usual benignity and good sense, took away the life of the satrap, to satisfy that thirst of revenge, which his vanity had provoked. It is thy part to imitate and improve on these great models: **ARTAXERXES** can think nothing, which adds to the glory and felicity of his reign, whatever be the hand producing it, a diminution of his personal merit.

There is something however in the way of collecting the great king's revenues, which are paid in kind, that has more an air of equity and grandeur, than the practice of the Athenians. Every country lays a portion of those commodities, for which it is distinguished, on the steps of his throne. The satrapy of Armenia sends 20,000 young horses annually to the stud at Nisæa; Ægypt, immense quantities of corn; Lydia, a thousand bars and ingots of gold. The queen's veil, girdle, and mantle, are the honourable names of three wealthy cities; the bread, wine, and wearing apparel of **THEMISTOCLES**, are to this day the appellations of others; and while those cities stand, they will be lasting monuments of the royal munificence.

One cannot but observe further, that this way of collecting is very little exposed to the hazard of embezzlements. The tributes of the empire are too unwieldy for the purposes of knavery; whereas in Athens, the pecuniary payments may now and then be secreted or lessened without fear of a

discovery, and afford strong temptations to the avarice and dishonesty of an officer. Yet I know not how it is, TERIBAZUS, such is the increasing, and at the same time the bashful nature of corruption, that the prostitute rise daily in their demands; but, unless it can assume a more convenient form than the cumbrous one of talents, must lye under difficulties in transacting with those, who are disposed to gratify them. The little dealings of that sort, to which the necessity of the king's service has obliged me, were attended with awkward circumstances; and if the sum was considerable, great caution required in the conveyance of it. I make no doubt, but the wisdom of posterity will introduce new refinements into this subject; or else vice, out of mere concern for its own interests, must stop short in its career, and the kingdom of AHRIMAN be destroyed, before the season appointed in the book of destiny.

C.

L E T T E R CLXXV.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

IT is probable, thou hast already received advice, that ARTAPHERNES has been detained at Eione by the Athenian collector of the tribute in those parts; and therefore the news of his arrival at Athens will not surprize thee, so much as it did myself, who was ignorant of what had befallen him in his passage through Thrace.

Judge of my astonishment, potent lord, when going down yesterday morning to the Piræus, I was told by a friend, whom I met with in the way, that a Persian satrap of distinguished quality was just arrived on board an Athenian galley. "What, returned I hastily, hath ARTAXERXES sent a public minister hither? Surely it must be a commission of singular importance, which could require so much secrecy, as that a more formal notification of the embassy should not be first given." My friend was unable to give me any further light into the matter; and we continued our walk to the port, but in the way fell in with a great multitude of people, in the midst of whom a band of soldiers, with the archon POLEMARCH at their head, were conducting an old man of a grave aspect, and majestic appearance, to the Prytaneum. I had the curiosity to press as near this venerable stranger as I could, and was amazed beyond measure to discern, in his countenance, all the features of my old patron and friend ARTAPHERNES.

I hastened out of the croud, that nobody might observe the concern I was under; and impatient to have my doubts cleared up, went instantly to CLEON's house, but was some time before I could see him, because several of the magistrates and ruling members of the assembly were that morning in close consultation with him. As soon as they were departed, he came to me, and prevented what I was going to say, by telling me, that an accident had happened, which, though it might seem to prognosticate a rupture with Persia, and appear inconsistent with the respect, which the republic had always professed for the great king, might yet, he hoped, by prudence and temper on both sides, be so managed, as to produce a perfect good understanding, and a closer friendship betwixt them. He then proceeded to acquaint me, "that ARISTIDES, (grandson of the great ARISTIDES) the collector of the tribute at Eione, having strong reasons to imagine, that a Persian satrap travelling through his jurisdiction was sent to negotiate with the enemies of this state, had ventured, without any orders from the people, to stop both him and his retinue; and being on his departure out of the country, had brought them in his squadron to Athens. That he had likewise inspected the papers of this ambassador, which entirely confirmed his suspicions; for amongst them he found a letter from ARTAXERXES to the Lacedæmonians, empowering the bearer of it, to make propositions in his name, and receive their's in return, and instructions to enter into a treaty with the Spartan republic on conditions therein specified." "This conduct of your court, added CLEON, is the strongest justification of our commissioners proceedings; for if they may be thought irregular, and a violation of the law of nations, surely the part Persia has taken to amuse us with overtures, in order to sell her alliance dearer to the Lacedæmonians, cannot deserve a much gentler name; and one extraordinary step may serve to excuse the other." He concluded, how-

ever, by assuring me, that “such were the real dispositions of his countrymen to prefer the friendship of Persia to all other considerations, and such his own desire to acknowledge the favours he had received from the king, that the magistrates would give orders for the entertainment of ARTAPHERNES in a manner suitable to his rank, and the dignity of the prince he represented; and it was likewise resolved to call an assembly in a few days, wherein he intended to move the nominating a solemn embassy to the court of Susa; and that ARTAPHERNES should be desired to accompany those, who were chosen for the employment. In the mean time, he said, we might in private conferences bring the project (mentioned in my former letters) to some maturity, and consequently ripen and prepare things for a more public negotiation.”

I heard him to the end of his discourse without interruption, and then replied briefly, that “as I had no orders from the king on this unexpected event, I could only speak my own sense of the matter, which was, that so notorious a breach of the law of nations, as stopping the person of a public minister, and examining his papers, could no otherwise be repaired or softened, than by a severe and speedy punishment inflicted on ARISTIDES, and an open disavowal of his behaviour: that I wondered to hear him aim at justifying the seizure of ARTAPHERNES from his being sent to the Lacedæmonians, as if the war between them and the Athenians deprived the king of his liberty to transact business with either of the parties by his ambassadors, who had an indisputable right to a free passage over the dominions of every state, with whom their master maintained a friendship, and were not to be stopped upon bare surmises.” I observed also, that “he himself tacitly supposed the injustice of the action considered apart, by putting it as a retaliation for the insincerity of the Persian court in their

dealings with Athens. But I little expected to hear reproaches of that nature come from one, towards whom the king had expressed so singular a confidence, and given already several proofs of his regard. And as to the papers, upon which he laid such stress, I ventured to affirm, that, upon a more accurate consideration of them, nothing else would appear, than that ARTAXERXES, like a prince careful of his own interest, and that of his subjects, was determined, that those should reap the advantages of his alliance, who shewed most readiness in acknowledging his just claims, and proved their title to his protection by the goodness of their cause. In respect to the last point, viz. the continuing our conferences, I remembered thy orders, that I should not be over forward in bringing matters to an issue; and therefore contented myself with alledging the propriety of deferring them, till we heard in what manner the king received the news of ARTAPHERNES's journey being stopped, lest we should spend time to no purpose, if violent measures on the part of Persia were the consequences of it.

This is the substance, potent Lord, of my conversation with CLEON, who embraced me at parting, and said, "Do no ill office, CLEANDER, and, I will answer for it, this affair will be amicably adjusted." I replied, "I should do my duty by giving a faithful account of what passed on this occasion, but that the king, whom I had the honour to serve, was too wise a prince, to want any suggestions from me, by which to regulate his affairs."

I have since found means to procure a private admittance to ARTAPHERNES, who is lodged in the Prytaneum, and entertained in a more splendid and honourable manner, than the ministers from any foreign state whom I

ever saw here. I refer thee to his letters, which he dispatches this night by an Astanda, for the particulars of his being seized at Eione, and of his usage and reception since his arrival in this city. He has likewise taken it upon himself to apprise thee of the reasons, which have induced him to come to a resolution, not to refuse accompanying the ambassadors (if the people shall appoint any) to the Persian court.

Thou wilt no doubt be curious to know, if ARISTIDES was really instructed by his masters to secure ARTAPHERNES in his passage; or whether (as CLEON protested to me more than once) he acted by his own authority, and did not acquaint the magistrates here with what he had done, till he entered the Piræus with his prisoners.

I have made the most diligent enquiry imaginable into this point. Our refiners in politics entertain themselves and their hearers with several speculations upon it equally various and uncertain. Some affirm, that ARISTIDES was instigated to commit so bold an action, by a private letter from CLEON, and two or three of his principal friends: others, with as much confidence, are extremely eager to whisper in one's ear, that it is all a contrivance of NICIAS, to induce his countrymen to clap up a peace with Sparta, after having offered so sensible an affront to the court of Persia. But I have sufficient grounds to believe, that this extraordinary behaviour of ARISTIDES takes its rise entirely from the natural temper of the man, who is rough, enterprizing, and inconsiderate, desirous at any rate to push himself forward, and filled with an hereditary abhorrence for Persia and the great king, which he carries to a ridiculous pitch.

From what I can collect of the disposition, which the people at present are in, they will not make the least scruple to disown their commissioner; but any motion for punishment is not likely to prevail, because it will be thought hard to give up an officer for a fault, which was occasioned by the excess of his zeal (though a mistaken one) for the public service. But I comfort myself with the thoughts, that the solemn embassy, which the Athenians are preparing, will come charged with submissions for what is past, and with concessions of the highest importance to the future interest of Persia. I am bold to say this, because it is wonderful to observe, how strong a turn the affections of the people have taken in our favour, and with how much rapture they extol the wise government of ARTAXERXES, and the felicity of his reign. It is improbable, that the Lacedæmonians will yield to their rivals in the contest, for an ally, who can add a casting weight to the balance of Greece: and thus will our monarch, the light and glory of the east, enjoy a distinction unknown to the most renowned of his ancestors, of seeing the chief nations in the west prostrate themselves by turns, for protection, at the foot of his resplendent throne.

From Athens the 14th of Pyanepsion.

P.

L E T T E R CLXXVI.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS.

I have long imagined, noble GOBRYAS, that the accounts, which I sometimes send thee of debates in the Athenian assembly, must be peculiarly agreeable to thee, as they tend to open the nature and genius of popular councils, and the different colours, in which the same point may be shewn by the wit, the zeal, and the jealousy of contending parties.

Yesterday CLEON, as * principal treasurer, presented to the people a scheme of the expences for the next year. They amounted to near two thirds of their annual revenues, which he proposed to lay out in equipping 60 gallies, 2000 foot, and 300 horse, for a secret expedition. This proposition occasioned a long and remarkable debate, in which the chiefs on both sides were careful to distinguish themselves. The adventurous minister, who moved it, opened the nature and reasons of it in a long and elaborate harangue. He declared, " that the opinion he was now going to offer was a natural consequence of his aversion to a peace, which must necessarily have been broken, when Sparta had recovered its strength, and found means to create an opportunity of renewing the war: that the only way to restore Athens to its

* Επιμελητής τῶν κοινῶν προσόδων, οἱ ταμίαι τῆς διοικήσεως.

original dominion over Greece, was to attack their enemies in the most sensible parts. He did not know, whether it was right to intimate too strongly what he had projected for a plan of military operation, in the words of the question; but he believed, that every one might understand, where lay the most sensible parts of the possessions of Lacedæmon. He said the island of Cythera was the wall and the citadel of Sparta; that there had not been that attention to secure it, which might have been expected from the importance of its situation; and he could not think it either impracticable or romantic to attempt it: that many had thought the attack upon Corinth last year a very wild scheme, yet it had been attended with some degree of success: that many more had thought the descent upon Sphacteria absurd to the degree of being ridiculous, yet the Gods had prospered them: that he saw no colour of argument, why they should be so far wanting to themselves, to the genius of their state, and to the propitious Deities, whom they worship, as to neglect an occasion of endeavouring to compass what they might long in vain have wished for; that now the occasion had presented itself, it appeared to be decisive, and the design more probably fortunate, than the expeditions just mentioned before they proved so in event: that let others say what they would of his measures, and miscall them rash, he must remind them, that the courage of a wise man does not arise so much from spirit, as from knowledge. “Athenians, concluded he, I am not one of the turn of mind with some, who might be named to you, who, when the affairs of our adversaries are in a flourishing condition, walk up and down with a more than ordinary cheerfulness in the forum, giving their hand to such as will be pleased with the news, and make a fair report of them to others, who mean the ruin of our state. Nor when your counsels are

prosperous, do I fix my eyes upon the ground, and sigh, because it flatters the opinion of the man I hate, and out of very grief for your security; but as I mean to exercise my reason, so I interest my passions and all my powers in your service." He was seconded by **LYSICLES** and **EUCRATES**, two of his instruments, one of them * paymaster of the forces, the other † comptroller of the public accounts.

The speech of **CLEON** made a good impression, and was esteemed an artful and notable performance. **DIODOTUS** rose up to answer him. He set out with professing, "that he was not in the least surprized with the reasonings of that day: he thought those, who had appeared with so much zeal in opposition to the Spartan commissioners, acted very consistently in proposing this measure for their assent: that he had all along differed from **CLEON** in opinion; and for his own part he durst as heartily oppose it, as others more sanguine dare advance it; for every step, which carried them from the prospect of peace, carried them further from the true interest of Athens. He said, it would be absurd to particularize the evils of war before those who felt them; and the rather, as an inexperience of them leads no man into it, and the severest sense of them diverts no man from it, while he suffers inclination to contrive his enterprizes, and hope to suggest the issue of them. That the effects of peace, in favour of that state, after former difficulties, should have induced them at least to give its advocates a fair hearing; that after the retreat of the Persians, they had for many years attended to the cultivation of commerce, to the splendor of their temples, and religious ceremonies; to the increase of their wealth, and quiet establishment of their

* Ταμίης τῶν στρατιωτικῶν.

† Αντιγραφίης τῆς διοικήσεως.

power: that the thing, which had most contributed to the preservation of their own and the common liberty at that juncture, was their moderation towards Sparta; that the wisdom, which they then shewed in deferring the command to that state, when it was foolishly and petulantly insisted on, had been the great source of their subsequent authority; and an imitation of that wisdom seemed the proper means of continuing it. That their expences are very burdensome: the poll-tax had been raised more than once since the beginning of the war (a circumstance extremely unusual); and though the public can support the calamities of a few private men, yet no private man can long support the calamities of the public: that they were already so far exhausted, as that in many years they could not be restored again to a sufficient balance for Persia: that it was neither the interest of Greece, nor of the great king, to see Lacedæmon, or indeed either of the contending cities, destroyed; because the former might suspect the conqueror would tyrannize over the lesser states; and the latter would know, that in such case the united strength of Greece might be brought to act uniformly against him under one head. So that the end proposed to these measures of entirely reducing Sparta appeared wholly unattainable; the means too impracticable; for though there was something plausible in the thought of attacking Cythera, yet it must prove very difficult in the execution; that the Spartans would certainly draw down their whole force to its defence, as soon as they hear of the design, and would be particularly studious of retrieving any credit they had lost in Sphacteria. As to the estimates, he thought them extravagant, and not made without a view to the personal benefit of such citizens, as have the management of the public coffers." "In conclusion, added he, to those, who eagerly wish the continuance of war, I desire leave to say, that it is not difficult, when advice is necessary, to assume an air of courage, nor when danger approaches to re-

present its terrors ; but this is as difficult as it is becoming, in danger to shew courage, and in council prudence."

The turns in popular assemblies are so quick, that the speech I have just recited, accompanied with great energy and pathos both of action and expression, seemed to have an effect upon the people, which was only to be taken off by EPIGENES, an orator of great eloquence and parts. He said, " he had flattered himself with hopes on the former question concerning the propositions of the Spartan commissioners, that those, who were for rejecting them, would have had the concurrence of the men, who entered into the war with eagerness, and admired the conduct of PERICLES: that he remembered the time, when that party held a very different language, and in a season of general distress, against the general opinion, opposed sending ambassadors to the Lacedæmonians, or receiving any from them: that since the support they had given to the commissioners, it was in some sort astonishing they should disapprove the motion now made; but their conduct was a strong proof of unadvised levity; all for war and vigour to-day, peace and moderation to-morrow. That it is no argument against the fitness of political measures to say they are attended with hazard; every measure of government, especially in war, is exposed to it; and provided the end be right, and the means not improbable, you ought to be at an expence in maintaining them: that while the Athenians intend to be the first people of Greece in trade, they must endeavour to be the first in power: that their naval force would decay, if they did not assert their authority on the continent of Greece and Asia." " Where, exclaimed he, will be the vent for your merchandizes? where the tribute and obedience of the islands? What friend will trust you? What enemy will fear you?" That the best way to maintain that autho-

rity, was to pursue the beginnings of their success, and to do otherwise would be preposterous. That to say nothing of their interest, they were bound in honour to this conduct. The late cruel usage of Platæa, an ancient ally of this city, as well as the injuries and violence, that produced the war on their part, shewed how little the Spartans regarded justice or humanity: that no punishment was too great for them, and the Gods are preparing to inflict it by the hand of Athens. That as to what is said of being restored as a balance to Persia, there is no weight in it; they were at no time a balance for Persia, scarcely even at the head of the confederacy: but the despair of being so great as they could wish, is no reason why they should not aim to be as great as they can. That as the interest of all states must vary according to their engagements and exigencies in different periods of time, so the interest of Athens must vary; and he was not without good hopes of the affection and alliance of the great king; and if they could secure his friendship, the reasonings about the politics of the sublime court must fall to the ground. He declared he would not enter into the particular estimates at present; he believed they were well considered; but that was a meaner consideration, and the fitness of the general measure should not be overlooked on their account. That it was highly necessary the question proposed by CLEON should be carried by a very great majority, if they meant to give spirit to their allies, to strike a terror into Sparta, and to gain that revenge, which the justice of their cause, as well as the prosperity of their arms, presaged for them."

ALCIBIADES rose next after EPIGENES, and convinced the people that day, he will be one of the finest speakers they ever have heard in their assembly. He opened with saying, "that he had very seldom troubled them with his thoughts upon any subject; and though he had some things

to offer of moment to the present question, yet he believed, that even the preparation he had made for delivering his sentiments before them, could hardly have induced him to get the better of that reserve and modesty, which he thought became him, if he had not been drawn up out of a regard to truth, and the memory of his uncle PERICLES. That the friends of this great man had acted a wise and consistent part, such as would have been approved and followed by himself: that when PERICLES was against sending ambassadors to treat of peace with Lacedæmon, it ought to be remembered, the city was distressed by the plague, and by the desolation of Attica: the terms they could then have gained, must have been attended with disgrace. That great man knew, at the same time, that the state had strength to support itself, till a turn of fortune should happen in its favour; then would be the proper season either to make or accept overtures of peace, and that season in his apprehension was the present. That those alone are to be charged with inconsistency, who were for negotiating a treaty in adversity, when it would have been to yield to their enemies, and not at present on the terms of conquest, when it is intreated at their own doors; who are for continuing the war in prosperity, which will be to leave things again to chance, that their valour had reduced to certainty: he could see nothing consistent in this, except an uniform plan of opposition to the public good. That if the Athenians behaved on this occasion with that insolence, which is but a too natural as well as fatal consequence of victory, we might depend upon it, that on the first change the Greeks would defer the generalship and authority to some other city: that the jealousy PERDICCAS had of them was no secret, nor how assiduous the Lacedæmonians are in exciting a disaffection in Thrace; and if that republic could receive no satisfaction as to the peace, so earnestly desired, it would exert its last efforts in attacking Eione and Amphipolis:

that should the proposition now made be attended to, Athens would become engaged in a war of acquisition, and not of defence: that this would be to alienate justice from their side, as well as to affront fortune. That as to what is concluded from the success at Sphacteria to the event of the project proposed, he laid no weight upon it: he still thought that expedition precipitate and rash; that every man, who has taken reasonable measures, has always the satisfaction of having done his part, even when those measures are defeated; but if he who undertakes an imprudent enterprize, should chance to prosper, he indeed accomplishes his design, and yet deserves no less blame, than if he had failed of success. That the delusion, which prevailed among his countrymen, was amazing. "When it was moved to prosecute the war with vigour some years ago, and to struggle with adversity, what was the answer? The plague exhausts our people; the expence exhausts our treasure: a bad peace is better than none. When it is now moved to make terms with advantage in prosperity, what is the cry? "The fate of the Plataeans: the pride of Sparta: the dominion of all Greece." That if they persevered in listening to the advice of that man, who seemed to have such extraordinary influence over them, the effects must be very ruinous; and he believed, that without procuring the sanction of an oracle (which some were fond of) to his opinion, he might venture to recommend the sentiment of *HESIOD as oracular, who says, "that the welfare of the state often suffers for the counsels and crimes of one bad citizen."

The friends of ALCIBIADES received this speech with the highest applause. It put them in mind of the thunder of PERICLES; but there are, who pretend to judge already, that his way of acting will never be equal to his eloquence. What surprized me in his manner of speaking, was the ex-

* HESIOD. Ἔργ. καὶ ἡμερῶν α'. V. 238.

treme deliberation of it, and the command, which so young a man discovered of himself. Though no one has a better invention, or more flowing diction, yet if the properest argument or phrase did not immediately occur to him, he would pause and hesitate till they did. He would repeat his last words over again, while he was thinking forward, and the produce always made amends for the delay. CLEON and EPIGENES however prevailed. The estimates were allowed, and the project on Cythera is to be executed. It was expected, that NICIAS would have taken a part in this debate; but it seems he told his party, that since the assembly would not hearken to peace, he should not oppose any probable scheme that might carry on the war. Others suggest, that he is to be general in the expedition, and being desirous of that service, would not vote against it. It is very difficult to determine on the hidden motives, which give rise to the conduct of any man; but the last consideration seems too trifling to determine NICIAS, and the first is agreeable to the singularity of his temper.

Excellent minister, I have often thought, that a diligent searcher into human nature may find better and more various materials for his enquiry in the noisy factions, that divide a popular government, than in the court parties, which arise under the silent and regular dispensations of monarchy. In the debates of the one upon public business, a man must be very artful indeed, who can always conceal indiscretion or vanity as an orator, avarice or ambition as a statesman; who, in a sudden emotion of the mind, or emergency of affairs, betrays neither fear nor rashness, neither insincerity nor weakness. In the councils of the other, those, who are at the head of them, are not exposed to the same means of discovering their abilities or foibles; every measure is taken at the unopposed suggestion of the minister, and the awful nod of the sovereign. In the former, if the

chief of a party is accused of crimes, the dispute grows warm ; his friends and his enemies distinguish themselves ; the understandings, the passions, the interests, the intrigues of both are laid open, and every man in Greece, according to his judgment, or his attachments, adopts the pretensions of either. In the latter, all these are the subject of dissimulation, and however different in different men, are covered by the same outside ; besides, as things are more summarily managed, of course there cannot be the same room for indulging them : the whisper of an eunuch decides the fate of a great minister, and the suffocating heat of the ash-tower prevents the complaints of himself and his relations from the ear of Asia.

C.

L E T T E R C L X X V I I .

SAPPHO to CLEANDER*.

WHEN I own CLEANDER, that I have seen thy ode upon the Attic myrtle, I think myself bound by it to no acknowledgement. CORINNA however insists upon my writing about it, even though it be to confess a delicacy, which she rallies as false and affected. I am too happy, she cries, at any rate to be the subject of so exquisite a muse. Forgive me, CLEANDER; a

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* The two letters of SAPHO to CLEANDER are extremely obscure. They relate to some correspondence, which had been carried on between him and that lady, in which however there was nothing dishonourable, as appears from several expressions in them. In the second, she opens herself with great severity and resentment on the manner, in which he had talked of the freedom she indulged him ; but it is very probable she was not rightly informed of his conduct, since the representation here given of it, is entirely inconsistent with every sentiment and every action, either explained or alluded to in this collection. Something must be allowed to her delicate sense of honour, which might suspect an injury, before almost the approach of it; and it is a presumption in CLEANDER's favour, that though he frequented very much the house of ASPASIA, and, he declares in Letter CXXXVII, even " courted the company of the fair sex," that these are the only passages, which charge him with an unbecoming levity. Other negotiators have been less rigid in the same particular. Our Ephesian understood how to converse with the ladies for political purposes, without proceeding to gallantries; which shews him to have been a complete master in the most refined insinuation. Note by the translator.

temper less lively than hers is overcome by the sentiments of the heart, and cannot but be shocked at a praise, that so plainly implies disesteem. What makes it the worse is, that thy verses are so likely to attain immortality. To be thus misrepresented by some inferior sculptor, had been but short-lived vexation; but the hand of a PHIDIAS will transmit the error to posterity. Let posterity think as it pleases; for thee, CLEANDER, I would be adorned rather with the modest, soft, and female graces, which dwell retired among the domestic virtues, than with those slight external charms; which have more lustre in poetry. Remember too, that HOMER (whom in the shades of Salamis we have so oft admired together, while the hours rolled away with an imperceptible swiftness) whose beauties burst upon thee with a blaze of light, while the wanton rays of ANACREON but played upon thy fancy, adorns his heroines with modest silence, and thinks the blush of VENUS too doubtful a praise, when he does not chastise it with the coy air of DIANA. I begin to be afraid, CLEANDER, that the unaffected ease of our Athenian manners, compared with those of other countries more familiar to thee, has made thee form a judgment greatly to our disadvantage. Observe, however, that the exact medium is equally distant from its extremes. Farewell: I accept the compliment of thy ode; I reject its flattery; and while you paint me with the shining qualities of the ancient SAPPHO, am too justly afraid of an inconstant PHAON.

T.

L E T T E R CLXXVIII.

SAPPHO to CLEANDER.

YET once more will I trust these treacherous tablets with the secret of my heart. Yet once more shall the vain CLEANDER boast, that he has received them from the hand of CORINNA; and from that air of mystery shall draw to the giddy companions of his mirth what licentious inferences he pleases. The name of SAPPHO is destined, I find, to be tost about by the infectious breath of slander, since CADMUS first brought into Greece the ill-fated letters, that compose it. Was it that name, CLEANDER, that inspired thee with this vain presumption? We both have been deceived by names: Faith, Honour, Constancy, Discretion, Tenderneſs, these too I find^l are empty names, no more implying any virtue in CLEANDER, than the detested name of SAPPHO imports that wild licentiousness of conduct in the daughter of PALAMEDE, which in a former SAPPHO made it infamous.

Methinks, CLEANDER, (for imagination will still be too busy in tracing familiar ideas) I see the astonishment, with which you read these tablets, so differently filled from what they used to be. The Muses and the sportive Graces here were used to court thy elegance of taste. The Muses and the sportive Graces fled in a mo-

ment at the sound of thy boasting: yet they called not the revengeful ATE to supply their place. Thy life, CLEANDER, was now really in my hand. Thy treacherous correspondence is betrayed by treachery. The wretch has sacrificed that trust to an idle passion, which the interests of his country—I too, CLEANDER, have sacrificed those interests to thy safety. The transcript, which he shewed me of thy infamous letter, inscribed to BAGOAS, hinders not my giving thee this necessary warning to secure thyself: such are our Grecian notions of fidelity to those, who once had a claim on our affection. Now boast among thy dissolute companions of the fond weakness of thy Grecian mistress. No, CLEANDER, the Gods will preserve my country from thy pernicious attempts, nor suffer such unjustifiable designs to prosper. As for my injured fame, before thou receivest these tablets, I shall have placed it under the inviolable protection of MINERVA, to whose chaste service the remainder of my days are devoted. The sacred veil shall hide me for ever from thy eyes, which I could never meet again without too fierce an indignation. Stranger, farewell: as such thou wert first introduced to me; as such I now take my eternal leave of thee. May the waters of oblivion wash out all remembrance of the interval, which, though absolved by Virtue, will to Prudence be for ever unpardonable.

T.

L E T T E R CLXXIX.

CLEANDER to GOBRYAS. From Athens.

THE news of PYTHON's being confined to his house upon the first advice, which the king received, that ARTAPHERNES was stopped at Eione, has produced all the good effects here, which could be desired from it. The moderation of ARTAXERXES in not carrying his resentment further, till he knew, whether the collector was authorized in his proceeding, is applauded by the whole city; and they are at the same time made sensible, that a decent submission, and a disavowal of ARISTIDES, are the only methods to prevent the bad consequences which must befall them, in case of a breach with Persia.

The assembly's letter to the king (which ARTAPHERNES sends in his packet) charges, I believe with great truth, this extravagant action on the rashness and inexperience of their commissioner; and the assurances contained in it, that he shall not be employed again in those parts, are the utmost that can be expected from this state in the way of censure or punishment.

As thy dispatches intimate, that the king seems disposed to make a new trial, whether Athens or Sparta will set the highest price on his friendship, we have not thought it prudent to insist, that ARTAPHERNES should be permitted to continue his journey to Lacedæmon, because it would

infallibly have been refused, and must have alarmed the republic with jealousies, that all the proposals, which have passed between us, were only intended to disguise the real designs of our monarch, to conclude a league to their prejudice with the Peloponnesian allies. The slightest circumstance is sufficient to raise suspicions here, which the greatest management and prudence cannot afterwards without difficulty allay; and there are several, who out of an inveterate hatred to Persia, and vehement desire of peace, lose no occasion to keep up the old prejudices, though at the present juncture the generality of the people begin to entertain more favourable impressions towards us.

We likewise considered, that if, as thou informest us, an express is on the road with fuller powers to the Lacedæmonian ambassadors, it becomes unnecessary to carry on a negotiation at Sparta; since ARTAXERXES will, more consistently with his own dignity and convenience, have the offers of that republic brought home to him, and be able to treat upon them within the walls of his palace, where business is transacted with far greater secrecy and dispatch, than amidst the uncertainties and tumults of these popular governments. Upon these considerations, ARTAPHERNES and myself presume to hope, that the king will pardon our boldness in transgressing his sacred orders, when, according to the best of our judgments on the spot, the carrying them into execution must have proved prejudicial to his service.

I am not surprized, that in your intelligence from Lacedæmon, the stop, which has been put to ARTAPHERNES's journey, is attributed to the malice and curiosity of CLEON. That republic would be glad to incense the court of Susa against one, whom they consider as their mortal enemy,

and revenge upon him the disappointment they lie under, in not having the rest of Greece witnesses to the honour done them by a Persian embassy. I need not mention to thee, how apt those at a distance are to refine on every unforeseen event, and to judge from appearances, which are often deceitful. Neither the suspicions, with which you tell me the court abounds upon this occasion, nor the accounts from Sparta, nor my own further enquiries here, give me any cause to change my opinion of the true spring of this accident, as laid open in my last dispatch.

The people are come to a resolution, after some debates, that ambassadors shall be forthwith sent to the Persian court; and *EPIGENES* of the tribe *Ajantis*, *HIPPONICUS* of the tribe *Cecropis*, and *HYPERBOLUS* of the tribe *Erechthis*, were in the next assembly chosen to execute that commission.

The first of these, in whose hands the secret seems most likely to be lodged, is a firm friend and partizan of *CLEON*'s, who generally employs him to prepare the minds of the people for any project, which is afterwards designed to be laid before them in form. His manner of speaking is plausible, flowing, and pointed, and chiefly remarkable, for being always adapted to conciliate the affections of his hearers, and leave an impression behind it, by giving some new and ingenious turn to the debate. Nor is his address in private conversation accounted inferior to his public eloquence: he is happy at finding out expedients to overcome difficulties, and equally ready at creating them, when he is not inclined to facilitate matters. He is never at a loss for a smart or proper reply, and soon finds out the means of insinuating himself into the good opinion of those, with whom he has any business to transact, and brings them over

to his sentiments, without appearing to impose upon their judgments. The integrity of *EPIGENES* is by no means so universally acknowledged, as his abilities; he was never reckoned a slave to his word, and is immoderately attached to profit, having raised one of the largest fortunes in the city, (which he makes no haste to spend) from the office of collector of the tribute amongst the islands, and from the presents, which he receives from the allies for recommending their causes to the people. He has one passion, which renders him a very proper negotiator of an alliance between us and his state, which is an implacable aversion to the *Lacedæmonians*, amongst whom he received some particular subject of offence, when he was ambassador at Sparta, before the war broke out. *HYPERBOLUS*, an Athenian of a bold licentious wit, told him not long ago, that "he found their iron money too weighty to be carried away, and has hated them on that account ever since."

HIPPONICUS boasts his descent from *HARMODIUS* and *ARISTOGITON*, but cannot value himself upon inheriting many of their virtues. His intentions towards the public are not esteemed bad, but his judgment is excessively weak, and his pride little inferior to his want of genius; so that with a great number of dependants, and a most plentiful estate, he is a very useless member of the commonwealth. He was in a constant opposition to the measures of *PERICLES*; and the laughers aver, it was for no other reason, but that being a descendant of the patriots who destroyed the usurpation of *PISISTRATUS*, he thought himself obliged to act against one, who was said to resemble that tyrant. *CLEON*, by flattering his vanity, and affecting to pay the utmost deference to his opinion, has gained the entire ascendant over him, and pitched upon him, as a fit person to maintain the dignity of the embassy, by his

splendid manner of living. In this no one here can pretend to equal HIPPONICUS; and together with his family it is the only means, by which he preserves any credit with the people. Our friends imagined, that the politeness and gaiety of CLORUS would mix very well with the dexterity of EPIGENES, and the magnificence of HIPPONICUS; and proposed it to him to appear as a candidate. He was transported at the offer, talked of nothing but the honour he should enjoy in being personally known to a minister of thy fame and abilities, and redoubled his complaisance to ARTAPHERNES, from whom he pressed for letters of recommendation to the principal satraps. But his felicity proved of short duration; for NICIAS not finding his strength sufficient to prevent the embassy, made a brisk push to get in at least one of CLEON's enemies, which occasioned the choice of HYPERBOLUS to complete the number. This man is descended from the dregs of the people; his father was a branded slave, and himself still carries on the trade of a lamp-maker. The meanness and profligacy of his manners are equal to the baseness of his origin. He has had the good fortune to rise into credit with the baseness of his origin. He has had the good fortune to rise into credit with the people, without a single quality to deserve the meanest office in the republic; but they are pleased with the freedom and severity of his abuse, and make use of him to check the forwardness and extravagance of CLEON, and spirit up the caution and timidity of NICIAS. He is unconcerned at the worst things that can be said of him, and is alike careless of glory, and insensible of shame. He professes to oppose every measure which CLEON recommends; and is consequently a warm stickler for a peace with Sparta, and declares he accepts this office out of no other view, than to disappoint the designs of such, as would betray for lucre the common interest of Greece, and the honour of Athens, to the ancient and natural enemies of both.

I doubt not, when you have him at Susa, that methods may be found to remove his prejudices; but at first you must be upon your guard against his violent behaviour, his scheming head, and his malicious heart.

Thou wilt smile, noble scribe, when I tell thee, that CLEON found none of his arguments made so deep an impression on the people, as an oracle, which he pretended the Athenian deputies, who are just returned from the annual solemnity at Delos, had received from the high-priest of APOLLO there. It is to the following effect: "When the birds of MINERVA and JOVE nestle together, then shall the owl ride upon the dolphin's back, and the branches of the olive-tree over-shadow the earth."

As this oracle is interpreted to signify the increase of the Athenian power and commerce by their union with Persia, the people have it perpetually in their mouths; and tell you, that the answers of the Delian God excel those which he delivers at his Delphic shrine, in certainty and clearness.

After all, I may well impute the weight, which is at present laid here upon the king's friendship, to the singular address, capacity, and zeal of ARTAPHERNES, who has gained, in the short time since his arrival, more personal esteem and credit with those who direct the counsels of Athens, than any foreigner was ever known to acquire. I refer myself to his dispatches for several material points, and shall conclude by assuring thee, that the ambassadors will sail with the first fair wind for Ephesus, as soon as their instructions are ready, which the assembly is now busied in preparing.

P.

Note by the Translator.

From the abrupt manner, in which these letters conclude, the reader will be led to imagine, and perhaps to lament, that they have shared the same fate with many other valuable remains of antiquity, in not being handed down to us undefaced by the injuries of time and barbarism. The judicious MENSHOBAB is strongly of opinion, that some epistles relating to the latter part of this collection are lost; particularly those, which must have been written during the time that intervened between the election of the ambassadors, and their embarking for Ephesus.

He likewise assures us, that, notwithstanding his most accurate enquiries he has never been able to discover, what became of CLEANDER, after the departure of ARTAPHERNES; and leaves it as an uncertain point, whether he took that opportunity of returning in his patron's train, and spent the remainder of a philosophical life in cultivating his Lydian farms, and enjoying the agreeable society at Taoes; or whether he continued to transact the Persian business at Athens, in the quality of a private agent some years longer.

The Translator is, however, inclined to think, (with the learned Jew) that the former is the most probable supposition; since the disorders, which broke out in all parts of the empire upon the death of ARTAXERXES, must have drawn off the attention of the Persians from Græcian politics, and added to the strong passion, which CLEANDER has, in many of his letters, expressed, for retirement and quiet, by making it uneasy and unsafe for him to act, amidst such frequent changes of princes as well as ministers, and such a fluctuating confused state of affairs. It may not be improper to lay before the reader an exact translation of the account given by THUCYDIDES (book 4.) of the seizure and dismissal of ARTAPHERNES; which will serve as a remarkable instance, to prove, how much his short and imperfect narratives of negotiations, and civil matters, are cleared up and enlarged by the additional circumstances and facts, recorded in the Athenian Letters.

“ In the beginning of the winter, ARISTIDES, the son of ARCHIPPUS one of the commanders of the squadron, sent to levy contributions, seized at Eione upon the Strymon, a Persian named ARTAPHERNES, who was on

his journey to Sparta with a commission from the king. He was brought to Athens; and his papers being translated out of the Assyrian tongue, were found to be addressed to the Lacedæmonians, and contained, amongst other particulars, that the king was at a loss to know their intentions; for, though they had sent several ambassadors to him, none of them agreed in making the same proposals. If they meant to deal sincerely with him, he desired they would dispatch his minister back to him with some citizens of their own. The Athenians soon after sent ambassadors to the Persian court, accompanied by ARTAPHERNES, who, when they arrived at Ephesus learnt the news of ARTAXERXES's death; upon which the ambassadors returned home, without prosecuting their journey."

P.

A P P E N D I X.

THE translator has thrown this letter, which was found towards the middle of the collection, at the end of it, as being manifestly spurious. He apprehends it to have been written by the Jew, so much spoken of in the preface; nor can he value himself on his discovering the forgery, because, except we would suppose CLEANDER to have been particularly honoured with a prophetic vision, (which the reader will not hastily credit,) it cannot be regarded as genuine. The performance seems intended to compliment the new philosophy, in which our learned MESHOBAH may be supposed to have informed himself; and in that light (to do him justice) is not without art or ingenuity. He probably thought this the most elegant way of introducing such a compliment, as extravagant flights of fancy in allegorical dreams or fables are favourable to the taste of the Rabbi's, and the manner of the Talmud. One might insist, if it were necessary, on the difference to be observed in the very air of the composition from the rest of the whole book; how much it reads in the Spanish with the ease and grace of an original, while the letters, that are of undoubted authority, carry along with them that stiffness, which is inseparable from the purest translations. But the editor cannot flatter himself, that the difference he is speaking of, will be felt by the English reader, as he is conscious, that the meanness of his own version has reduced them to the same level.

L E T T E R C L X X X .

CELANDER to SMERDIS.

THOU hast had frequent specimens of my manner of philosophizing; but no enquiry was ever ended so remarkably, as one, which employed me last night. I was preparing a few thoughts for thee upon the origin and meaning of that worship, which has been paid to VESTA, considered in the capacity both of ^a Earth and ^b Fire. The question was perplexed with such difficulties, that at last I despaired of unravelling it, and retired to my couch. I little apprehended any extraordinary impressions from the speculation, but soon found it engaged me in my sleep; and when the morning brings with it the purer visions, imagination of its own accord performed in a dream, what I had in vain sought from the efforts of my reason. The first part is intelligible, since it arose from images, with which I had just been conversing; but as these wore off, the last part grew wild, and was obscure to me, whatever the relation of it may appear to thy more enlightened understanding. The

^a Καὶ γὰρ μήτηρ, Ἑστίαν δὲ σ' οἱ σοφοὶ
βροτῶν καλῶσιν, ἡμένην ἐν αἰθέρι. EUR.

^b Νυμῆς δὲ λέγεται καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἑστίας ἱερὸν ἐγκύκλιον περιβαλίσθαι τῷ ἀσβεστῷ περὶ φρυγάν* ἀπομιμνήμενος ὃ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς γῆς, ὡς Ἑστίας ὄσσε, ἀλλὰ τῷ σύμπαντος κόσμου, ὃ μέσον οἱ Πυθαγορικοὶ τὸ πῦρ ἰδεσθαι νομίζουσι, καὶ τοῦτο Ἑστία καλοῦσι καὶ μυσάδα. PLUT. in Num. p. 67. T. I. Ed. Franc. 1599.

soul at once unfettered itself from the body, and was amused, either in fantastic roving, or prophetic suggestions.

I thought myself suddenly transported without the walls of ^c Corinth on a plain, where stood a temple erected to the Goddesses. It was in form a rotunda, with extended porticos, that faced the different quarters of the world, and served as avenues to the body of the building, all tending towards it, like radii to the centre of a circle. They were supported by pillars of the most elegant proportions, but of the simplest order. The walls and ceilings were not covered with reliefs or fabulous paintings, to catch the eye, and conceal defects in the architecture, which from the justness of it gave pleasure to the judicious, and without ornament engaged even the ignorant spectator in admiring it. I pressed through a crowd of people, who were contemplating the outside, and entered at the ^d Eastern gate, where I perceived the generality went in; for though the rest were open, to intimate, that the Goddesses gave free admission to her votaries, yet they were frequented by none. Scarce had I made my way into the portico, when one met me, who seemed by a certain air of superiority, and the respect, which every body paid him, to be the priest of the dome. His face was wrinkled with age, but had a dignity and spirit, which excited veneration. He bore in his hand a wand, that geometricians use to draw figures in the sand. The number three, called the perfect harmony, was wrought in the skirt of his garment, which, as it flowed behind him, discovered sometimes to my amazement a golden thigh. By these marks I knew him for PYTHAGORAS. He received

^c There was a temple at Corinth dedicated to VESTA. See PAUSANIAS Co.

^d Astronomy and physics were first studied and taught in the eastern countries.

me courteously, and commanded me to follow him. When he saw I was under some confusion at this unexpected civility, and seemed dubious of the conditions, on which I was to accept it, he assured me, that he would dispense with the silence he often imposed on his novices, and encouraged me to discourse freely. As we approached the rotunda, we fell in with a great number of ^c Chaldean astronomers, Ægyptian priests, Phœnician sailors, and persian magi, who were paying their oblations to the Deity; and believe me, excellent SMERDIS, in this last number I observed a resemblance of thee.

The image of the Deity was ^f represented sitting, to imitate stability. A torch was held in her right hand, and a patera in her left; the one to express her character as the genial heat of the system; the other, that as the person of philosophy, she expected continual presents should be made to her, because philosophy is the noblest exercise of the reason. Before her stood an altar with fire always blazing, and six priestesses danced round it in mystic measures. My guide told me they copied the movements of the worlds on high. I put questions to him, in walking over the temple, concerning the antiquity and ceremonies of it. He answered, that himself had raised it, and that every man was admitted, who had contributed in the least to the improvement of physical knowledge.

On returning to the eastern avenue, I was surprized to see many in Græcian habits, in close ^g conference with the Ægyptians, and particularly with one, who stood near the

* In this vision the progress of philosophy is marked from the earliest ages to our own times.

[†] The symbols are drawn from the accounts of antiquity.

[‡] It is well known, that the Greek philosophers used to travel into Ægypt, to receive the instructions of the priests.

rotunda, and held a volume under his arm. They told me his name was HERMES TRISMEGISTUS. Afterwards they repaired to the western door, and came up in form with their offerings to the Goddess. The first was ^h THALES, whom PYTHAGORAS received with much regard, and made him a low obeisance as to his master. He advanced to the altar, and out of a cup, which he brought with him, made a libation which damped the flame of it; and on enquiry I found it to be water. The priestesses were in a good deal of consternation, but the thing proved of no consequence. His great merit in other respects was admitted as an excuse for his conceit, that "water was the first principle of all things;" which he defended with a good deal of wild ingenuity. The next, who appeared, were ⁱ ANAXIMENES and ^k METON; the one laid a gnomon or dial, and the other a calendar on the shrine. PYTHAGORAS seemed pleased with their offerings; and I took notice, through the whole of the scenery, that the experimental philosophers were more acceptable than the systematical reasoners. After this ^l DEMOCRITUS came forward with one of his followers, whose name and person I was unacquainted with. He laughed exceedingly at THALES, as he passed by; and when he came to the image, composed himself with difficulty, and threw down an heap of sand. The assembly cried out to him, that he had fixed the ridicule on himself. This only increased his diversion, and he immediately went away with

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^h THALES was the master of PYTHAGORAS.

ⁱ ANAXIMENES was the first, who brought a dial into Greece, and put it up at Sparta to the astonishment of that people.

^k METON was the first, who reduced the Greek Calendar into method. He lived towards the beginning of the Peloponnesian war.

^l See Letter XXVII.

his pupil. PYTHAGORAS declared, " he was glad to be well rid of them, adding, that he was more averſe to the ^m ſcholar, than the maſter ; ſince I have objections to him, ſaid he, not only as a maintainer of the atomic ſcheme, and a contemner of the Goddeſs ; but as one, who, though he lives upon legumes himſelf, teaches others to have an extravagant fondneſs for fleſh." As ſoon as theſe withdrew, ⁿ ANAXAGORAS appeared, who, notwithſtanding he denied the divinity of MITHRAS, had more honours paid him, than the moſt ſtrenuous aſſertor of it among the magi in the eaſtern avenue. I was going to have expoſtulated with the prieſt on this manifeſt partiality, but was called off to other objects. For on caſting my eyes to the weſtern entrance, I thought I ſaw my friend ^o SOCRATES look in upon us : he turned away preſently with an air of irony and banter. He ſeemed to have two diſciples with him ; the ^p one followed his maſter ; and the ^q other, having accompanied him a little while, ſtepped back, and viſited the temple. His fellow called after him, and rebuked him, but he gave no attention to it. He ſeemed habited with much oſtentation, and had a majeſty in his gait and manner,

^m EPICURUS, a philoſopher of great temperance in his own manners, but whoſe principles have been thought to lead to very hurtful conſequences. His followers were generally remarkable for their debauched and luxurious way of living.

ⁿ See Letter XXXVIII. He was accuſed at Athens for impiety, having aſſerted the ſun to be a maſs of fire, no bigger than the Peloponneſus.

^o SOCRATES had a contempt for phyſical ſcience, and applied himſelf to morals, as being much more certain and important.

^{p, q} XENOPHON and PLATO. The former was a ſtrict follower of his maſter, and uſed to complain of the latter, that he deviated from the maxims of SOCRATES. They had on this account a great averſion to one another.

that was almost theatrical. Many thronged about him, and endeavoured to recommend themselves; but it was remarkable, † one of his pupils, who had a rough bold appearance, yet whose demeanour bespoke a good deal of smartness and sense, pressed rudely by him, and pretended, that he had a better right to the general approbation. Instead of observing (what I naturally expected from this event) indignation in the faces of those, who beheld it, I found most people were not dissatisfied; and that the man, by a plausible subtilty in his way of talking, soon captivated the understandings and affections of those, who heard him. At last his friends began to make such a noise, that PYTHAGORAS thought it quite indecent. He reminded them, “that the glory of the Goddess was advanced by silence and contemplation, not † sophistry and dispute;” and protested, he would turn them every one out of the dome, if they would not be quiet. “As to the person, to whom the indignity was offered, he seemed inclined to turn back again, and find out SOCRATES. Accordingly, after conversing with some of the † geometricians, he was preparing to go out; but PYTHAGORAS stopped him at the door, and recommended him to four of his followers, who opened to him the mysteries of that philosophy. He then left us,

L 1 2

† ARISTOTLE, who took a pleasure to contradict PLATO his master, and differ from him in his writings.

† The Aristotelian way of disputation has more obstructed the progress of science, in the opinion of lord BACON, than any other cause, which can be assigned.

† PLATO was fond of geometry, and the powers of numbers. Though he professed to take in all parts of science, yet he applied himself chiefly to morality. He was instructed in the Pythagorean philosophy by ACRION TIMEUS, ARCHYTAS, and EURYTUS, who were of that sect.

nor appeared a second time amongst us. I observed, during the whole of this time, that the western portico was every instant more and more crowded with the worshippers of the Goddess. Some entered with dissections of plants and animals, others with catalogues of the stars, others with spheres; all which they offered to the image. In the company of those, who walked about with white wands, and were often intent on the schemes they drew upon the ground, I could not avoid taking notice of a person, who had a cone and cylinder in one hand, and a pulley in the other. I heard him ^w say, "if he had a proper place to stand in, he would move the earth." Not long after there came in ^w one of a fine presence and graceful mien, with a laurel-wreath upon his head, and a robe of a new and particular fashion, which hung loosely from his left shoulder. Every body made way for him, and expected, that he would have paid some respect to the most distinguished in the crowd, as he passed up to the rotunda; but he spoke to nobody except METON; then addressed himself to the altar, presented a new calendar, and walked out again.

While I was expressing my surprize to PYTHAGORAS at the sight of this extraordinary person, methought the whole assemble ^{*} vanished on the sudden. We found ourselves deserted and alone. On looking out towards the plain, a new temple appeared on the other side, built much

^{*} A celebrated saying of ARCHIMEDES at the siege of Syracuse, when he destroyed the Roman ships, by raising them into the air with a vast engine.

^w JULIUS CESAR, who reformed the calendar.

^{*} In the barbarous ages, when the Ptolemaic system was most universally credited, the writings and opinions of the ancients were almost forgotten.

after the manner of PYTHAGORAS's, and designed to rival it. A great crowd was gathered about it, and all men went into it. Curiosity disposed me to visit it; but my philosophic guide was exceedingly averse to the proposal, and would have dissuaded me from it. "I am not willing, cried he, you should give countenance to popular errors; and be assured, that while this fabric stands the test of many ages, and engages the veneration of wise posterity, that will fall into decay and ruin." When I arrived at the dome, I could hardly make my way into it for the numbers that surrounded it, and filled the avenues and precincts of it. As soon as I got near enough to the Goddess, I discerned, that the place was consecrated to VESTA in the capacity of earth. An altar of turf stood before the image, which was, as in the other temple, represented sitting. Seven priestesses attended it, but their dance was so extremely confused and irregular, that I could not help saying to one, who was near me, "there was neither grace nor harmony in their motion." The chief priest, who overheard me, and had taught them the perplexed figures, which they moved in, expressed some anger at my freedom, and would have put me out of countenance, had I not been supported by ^z a king, who came far from the west, and declared publicly, "If he had been consulted on the plan both of the building and the dance, he would have contrived much better." The most devout worshipper was a ^a satrap of Babylon, followed by a great number of Ara-

^y The cycles and epicycles of PROLEMY. He appeared under ANTONINUS PHILOSOPHUS, and was a famous geographer and astronomer in Alexandria.

^z ALPHONSO, King of Castile, who is reported to have said, on being instructed in PROLEMY's astronomy, that had God consulted him at the creation, he could have contrived a much simpler system.

^a ALMAMON, caliph of Babylon, who caused PROLEMY's works to be translated into Arabic, about the eleventh century.

bians, who were equally admirers of the priest, and votaries of the Deity, with himself. I observed about this time a very extraordinary person, dressed in a plain white habit tied round his body with a rope, his head covered with a veil or hood, which on the veil's being thrown back dazzled my eyes, as it were made of ^b brass. He pryed with the minutest exactness into every corner of the temple, and disdained to be content with the information, which the ordinary attendants would have afforded him. This behaviour raised great jealousy and great admiration. In his right hand he held pieces of crystal cut into various forms; in his left, a few specimens of different kinds of minerals. He was desirous to approach the altar, and made towards it, that, as he said, he might contemplate at leisure the rites of it, and the influence, which the charms of the priestesses had in ^c engaging every spectator to the worship of the Deity. By this time the freedom of his spirit had gained him enemies. They applied themselves to keep him as near the door, and as far from the recesses of the temple as they could; and in a moment I heard a confused

^b The reader will presently find, that this description is meant for Friar BACON, who had a very inventive and inquisitive genius, in an age of blind ignorance and subjection to the authority of great names. He was vulgarly taken for a conjurer and magician, because he knew more of the wonders of nature than other men. The stories of the brazen head, which gave articulate sounds, are unquestionably fabulous. He wrote of vision, of optical glasses, of chemistry, &c. He had some faith in astrology, but much more qualified and philosophical than that of the generality, who have been devoted to it. Pope NICHOLAS the 4th, by the instigation of the monks of BACON's own order, put him under close confinement, from which he was set at liberty by the means of several noble persons. It is very probable, from some passages in his works, that he was the inventor of gunpowder.

^c Astrology, which is productive of the worst superstition, was derived from, and chiefly pursued during the credit and cultivation of the false astronomy.

senseless, and unintelligible murmur of necromancy, magic, enchanter; and many persons, exactly habited in the same manner with himself, whispered much slander of him amongst the crowd. Some expressed the greatest abhorrence of him on account of these suggestions; others were so silly, as both to believe, that he was skilled in divination, and to be pleased with hearing it. They propounded curious questions to him, and secretly aimed to be instructed by him in the art. He took great pains to explain and vindicate at large his conduct, yet to no purpose. I then saw the chief priest of this spurious temple command one, who stood near him, and was much distinguished by his favour, to go and bind in chains the man, who had created so much attention, and disturbed the service and devotion of the place. He, who had been thus commanded, executed his office with a suitable severity. He wore a rich priestly garment and a scarlet cap. To his girdle was fixed a bunch of keys, which, as I thought, belonged to the several gates and doors of the Rotunda. I felt a very hearty compassion for the fate of the unhappy person, which prompted me to walk towards him, and administer some comfort. But on talking with him, I found, that a just resentment had possessed him very strongly; for he proceeded even to menaces, and told me, that "by JUPITER, he knew of a certain combustible matter, which, if properly applied, would tear the temple from its foundations, and bury the priest with his Vesta in the ruins of it." Others came up, who released him, and immediately he retired in precipitation, with ^d one, whom I understood to be his disciple and intimate fellow-labourer. Some time after, the dome gave a loud and dreadful crack: the assembly had for the most part warning and leisure to

^d THOMAS BUNGEY, a Franciscan friar, the follower and companion of ROGER BACON.

retire, but on its fall the priest and Goddess were never heard of more.

I could not in my own mind acquit this stranger with the brazen head (for whom I almost began to entertain as much respect, as for my friend with the golden thigh) of having a principal share in producing this event. However, I forbore to say what I knew of it, and hastened back to PYTHAGORAS's temple with the multitude, where I was amazed on my return to find the most considerable philosophers, who were before in the * western avenue, again making their appearance in it. And now great numbers, who were received with peculiar honours, came in from a quarter, where I least expected them, the northern portico. They were habited in an uncouth manner, and wholly unlike any thing I have seen either in Persia or in Greece. The † first made a merit of that, which I had been careful not to charge on any one; and indeed took away my suspicions of the man, who had been fettered in the other temple, by recommending himself for having endeavoured to draw the many from the worship of the pretended Deity, to revive the honours of the true. He described the several arts he had used, to undermine and destroy that temple, with success. PYTHAGORAS received him affectionately, and admitted him into a partnership of the priesthood for his extraordinary services. The § next, who came forward, laid a telescope at the foot

* Alludes to the restoration of the ancient philosophy and writings.

† When COPERNICUS appeared in the thirteenth century, the system of PTOLEMY lost its reputation. He was the restorer of the Pythagorean opinion, that the sun is in the centre.

‡ GALILEO the inventor of the telescope.

of the altar. The ^h third, who had a good deal of pride and haughtiness in his manner, was employed to delineate the motions of the heavenly bodies on the roof of the Rotunda. He afterwards talked to PYTHAGORAS about reconciling the worship of the two temples, but the proposition was rejected with contempt. The ⁱ fourth was dressed in a soldier's habit. He carried in his hand a double cube, and had a rabble of chymists at his heels. As he came up to the altar, he jostled him, who had so rudely pressed by his master early in the vision, and a contest ensued. The suffrages of the croud were divided; but the military philosopher having the geometricians on his side, seemed to get the better in the dispute. They were both jealous of their fame, and diligent to canvass the opinions of the by-standers. At last ^k one advanced up the same avenue, who professed himself not satisfied with the reasonings of either. He wore a gown covered with loops of gold, and in

^h TYCHO BRAHE the Dane, who lived in the fifteenth century, in a little island, which the king of Denmark had given him. He is represented to have been of a morose temper, but a great astronomer. He spent twenty years and 5000 dollars in making a sphere, on which he had delineated, with the utmost exactness, the various courses of the planets and appearances of the constellations at various seasons of the year. He has given an accurate description of it in his works. There is a system called the Tychonic, designed to compound the difference between the Ptolemaic and Copernican. See HUET.

ⁱ DESCARTES, who had been a soldier, before he turned philosopher, helped to reform the errors, and hurt the credit of ARISTOTLE, whose opinions had long been the standard of science. His geometry is much esteemed. He was the inventor of the double cube, and a favourite of the chymists.

^k Lord Chan. BACON, who first opened the method of induction in philosophy, and reasoning from effects to causes. See his *Novum Organum*, and his book *de Augm. scientiarum*.

the form and richness of his habit differed from the rest. On inquiry, I found, though he was employed in a public character in his own country, yet he had found leisure, as well as genius and inclination, to strike into the paths of philosophy, and was desirous to pay his homage to the shrine. At parting he put a paper into the hands of PYTHAGORAS, which was a project for the improvement of the sciences. He was succeeded by¹ another, who had an aspect of great seriousness and piety, and ushered in a large tribe of worshippers. He held in his hand an ^m air-pump, and ⁿ discoursed strongly with PYTHAGORAS in favour of the paper, which had just been presented to him. When I surveyed the train that followed him, I could neither count the number of persons, who poured in one after another, nor the inventions, which they brought with them. Among these I observed, that two ^o men stepped up to the vestal, who stood outermost in the rotunda, and presented her with five pages, and a golden ring. But methought

¹ Mr. BOYLE, one of the first, who struck into lord BACON's way with extraordinary success, and was the best experimental philosopher, that any age has known. He attempted an history of the air, and contrived the air-pump.

^m The Jew has a note in this place, where he says, that for the sake of brevity and perspicuity, he has used the modern term air-pump, and in another the word pendulum; because they are expressed with much circumlocution in the old Persic, and the things are to be known with difficulty from the particular descriptions of them; a note plainly intended to imprint a notion of seriousness, and amuse the reader.

ⁿ Alluding to Mr. BOYLE's treatises on the usefulness of experimental knowledge, which he published at the time of instituting the Royal Society.

^o HUYGEN's and CASSINI discovered the Satellites and ring of Saturn.

the oddest figure I saw, was a P person, who entered the temple with a pair of wings upon his back, and on coming near to the altar, eyed a virgin attending one of the priestesses with so much tenderness, that the generality begun to laugh at him, and concluded his gravity had a great mixture of absurdity. What made it the more ridiculous was, that every one understood she was not to be come at, and had made a vow of chastity. Those, who knew him better, said, he was a man of sense, and truly devoted to the Goddess. The next, who drew my attention, drew upon himself likewise the eyes and admiration of all present. He had such a modesty in his deportment, that while he blushed to receive those honours, which were paid to his merit, he put envy and detraction out of countenance. The geometricians went in a body to meet him; and it was remarked, that he paid a particular respect to ^a one of them, to whom he owned himself greatly obliged. The two contending philosophers were the only men unhappy in his presence; they united on this occasion, and went out together. As the northern genius came forward, PYTHAGORAS entreated him to accept his office in that temple, as more worthy of it than himself. He declined it, and said, " he was sensible, that these favours much exceeded the measure of his deserts. He could wish therefore, that an intimate friend of his might share in them, from whom he had received many lights, and who would to yeild nobody in that assembly, either for the zeal, or the success of his enquiries after truth." Immedi-

^P Bishop WILKINS had a strong notion, that an art of flying might be invented, and struck out several schemes for accomplishing a voyage to the moon. Though he had a clear, reasoning, mathematical head, yet he indulged himself in conceits of this nature. See his *Math. Magic, &c.*

^a Sir ISAAC NEWTON was a great admirer of EUCLID.

ately PYTHAGORAS led up ^r one who presented a magnet, and a bag of winds; of which last, I was told, he better understood the management, than either ^t ULYSSES or his companions. This excellent person then advancing himself towards the Goddess, laid a ^t chrystal prism and a ^u pendulum at her feet. The image nodded, and the flame on the altar burnt brighter. In that instant I imagined I saw SOCRATES among his attendants. I accosted him immediately, and asked, what had induced him to enter the temple now, when he had passed by it before with disdain. He answered, "All truths are connected. This great man has carried natural knowledge to such an height, that I am convinced the bounds of moral philosophy must be extended in proportion." "Surely, said I to myself in rapture and astonishment, we have cause to regret the unmeasurableness of art, and the shortness of life, which contribute equally to conceal from us these amazing discoveries. There has not been wanting industry or genius in our times; but we possess these instruments of science in vain, if what the reason of one age approves, the reason of another condemns; and if it be the will of the great OROMASDES, that truth should be rather stumbled on by accident, than found upon search. We have a contempt for the low attainments of ancient days; and yet our successors will still more justly laugh at us, for giving credit to the ^w water of THALES, and

^r Dr. HALLEY. See his theory of the magnet and of the winds in the Philosophic. Transact.

^s See the X. B. HOM. ODYS.

^t, ^u The one alluding to his discoveries in optics; the other to his grand principle of gravitation.

^w, ^x Sir ISAAC NEWTON seems, in different parts of his life, to have entertained conjectures, not unlike the two different principles on which

the $\times$ atoms of DEMOCRITUS, when by the assistance of a few rational principles, and rational men, they shall have opened a field of knowledge to be perpetually enlarged by experience; in which every one of common sense, and common observation, may be useful; where the sensualist may find something, that will promote his pleasures, and the virtuous can find nothing, that is unworthy of his labours." This strain of eloquence disturbed my rest, and broke the agreeable vision.

Excellent SMERDIS, vouchsafe to unfold the hidden meaning of what I have related. If the whole be chimerical, and arose from the fumes of indigestion, and a disordered state of body, permit me at least to say, that my sleeping thoughts are much better than my waking ones. But if it was presented to my fancy by those genii, who haunt the slumbers of the pious, and possess the mirror of futu-

the systems of THALES and DEMOCRITUS were founded, though conceived and expressed much more intelligibly and philosophically. In a letter to Mr. OLDENBURG, dated January 25, 1675-6, he has these remarkable words: "The frame of nature may be nothing but various contextures of ætherial spirits condensed as it were by precipitation, something after the manner, that vapours are condensed into water, or exhalations into grosser substances, though not so easily condensable; and after condensation wrought into various forms, at first by the immediate hand of the Creator, and ever since by the power of nature, who by virtue of the command, increase and multiply, became a complete imitator of the copies set her by the protoplast. Thus may all things be originated from Æther, &c." In the second edition of his Optics, 1717, towards the conclusion he expresses himself thus: "All bodies seem to be composed of hard particles; for otherwise fluids would not congeal, &c. and therefore hardness may be reckoned the property of all uncompounded matter, &c. All these things considered, it is probable, that God in the beginning formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles, &c. These primitive particles being solid, are incomparably harder than any porous bodies compounded of them; even so hard, as never to break or wear in pieces, &c." The first of these conjectures bears a resemblance to the water or Æther of THALES; the second to the atomic or corpuscular philosophy of DEMOCRITUS.

rity, I shall think myself the most highly favoured of mankind.

C

ADDITION to the LIVth LETTER.

P. 105. l. 14. *After the words, "in which the Athenians are auxiliaries to the latter," insert as follows, and omit the last sentence of that paragraph:* and have engaged to send a fleet to support him in his project of setting AMYNTAS, the son of PHILIP, brother to PERDICCAS, on his uncle's throne. The Thracian monarch has raised a very numerous army, not less than 150,000 men, out of his own subjects, and the nations his allies. He is marched at the head of it to invade Macedon, carrying along with him the young AMYNTAS, whom he treats as a king. PERDICCAS, sensible of his inability to keep the field against so superior a force, has thrown the best of his infantry into his strongest places, and contents himself with harassing the enemy, defending the passes, and laying waste the country to deprive them of subsistence by means of his cavalry, which are excellent. SITALCES has notwithstanding made a considerable progress already. Womene, a frontier town, which ventured to stand a siege, he carried by storm; and several others, as Mygdonia, Griftonia, and Anthemus, have surrendered without opposition, out of regard to the memory of PHILIP, whose inheritance they once were. The Athenians think it a very seasonable and useful diversion, for they are well assured, that the Macedonian king was on

the point of entering a second time into the confederacy against them, if this war had not reduced him to a state of self-defence.

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THE END.

